

This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`



6000117360

29
688.

6000117360

29
688.



A

PARAPHRASTIC TRANSLATION

OF THE

APOSTOLICAL EPISTLES.

62 f A M.1829.

PARAPHRASTIC TRANSLATION

OF THE

APOSTOLICAL EPISTLES.

WITH NOTES.



BY

PHILIP NICHOLAS SHUTTLEWORTH, D.D.

WARDEN OF NEW COLLEGE, OXFORD, AND RECTOR OF FOXLEY, WILTS.

OXFORD,

PRINTED BY W. BAXTER,

FOR J. PARKER; AND C. AND J. RIVINGTON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD, AND WATERLOO PLACE, LONDON.

1829.

6 88.

TO THE REVEREND

WILLIAM STANLEY GODDARD, D.D.

My dear Sir,

THE motive for my request that I might be permitted to address the present volume to you was, that I might avail myself of the opportunity which it would afford me of publicly expressing my grateful acknowledgments for the real kindness and the truly valuable instruction which, at an important period of my life, I had the happiness of receiving from you, when placed under your care on the foundation of Winchester College. More than twenty-eight years have now elapsed since my removal from that seat of my early education; but the course of time has diminished nothing of the distinctness of recollection with which I at this moment look back to the uniform and impartial integrity displayed by you in the exercise of your

high trust as Head Master of that establishment; your unremitting anxiety for the welfare of your pupils; and the judgment and ability with which you directed their studies. In expressing these sentiments, I feel that I am at the same time conveying those of every other member of the Wiccamical body, who has had a similar opportunity with myself for forming an opinion. Scanty as, from the operation of untoward circumstances, your reward has been in other respects, you have at least one, which to a mind like yours is far more valuable than the gratification of mere temporal ambition, in the sincere attachment and respect of those who owe to your fostering care their most important acquirements; and in the cheering retrospect of an highly useful and well-spent life. That you may long continue to enjoy these and all other blessings consistent with our mortal allotment, is, Dear Sir, the sincere wish of

Your obliged friend and servant,

PH. N. SHUTTLEWORTH.

PREFACE.

THE object of the present publication is to render the apprehension of the Apostolical Epistles easy and familiar to that numerous class of readers, who, from local or other disadvantages, cannot be expected to pursue without assistance the fine trains of reasoning which they contain, or to be able to explain those many incidental obscurities which the gradual change of manners and of language has inevitably introduced into them. In an age perfectly unexampled for its eager pursuit of religious knowledge, and for the vast influx of light, which the researches of the learned have poured upon the profounder questions of theology, it cannot but be matter of surprise that so little should have been attempted in

that humble walk of scriptural exposition, which, without aiming at the discovery of any new and unexplored truths, strives only to render the study of the sacred writings more generally attractive and beneficial, by making them more accessible and intelligible. That some work, executed on the plan of this which it has been my lot to undertake, is much wanted at the present moment, must, I think, be universally acknowledged. When we recollect the very close and earnest attention which even scholars, trained up in all the habits of acute disputation, are obliged to bring with them to the study of the Epistles of the New Testament, before they can do sufficient justice to the profundity of reflexion and the elaborate acuteness of argument which they contain, we surely cannot but feel that to a vast portion of the religious world they must, in the form in which they are most usually resorted to, present much which is liable to misconstruction, and much which must appear almost hopelessly obscure. What portion of that obscurity may be made clear to the understanding of common readers, by discarding the occasionally ob-

solete phraseology and constrained idioms of our established version, and by distending over a wider surface the closely compressed thoughts and deep argumentation of the original compositions, may admit of difference of opinion. Something in this way however may, at all events, be done. It is surely no derogation from the value of these, or of any other, portions of the sacred writings to assert of them, that, unless we suppose the same preternatural aid invariably to attend the reader of them which we believe to have accompanied the original writers, the degree of their perspicuity must in all ages depend upon the same combinations of accidental circumstances which produce, or diminish, that of all other literary compositions whatsoever. Allusions to the facts whether of sacred or of profane history can only, without a miracle, be understood by those persons who have in some degree made that department of history their study; and polemical discussions, whether on questions of philosophy or religion, must be deprived of their technicalities, and be more broadly and distinctly brought out, in plain and familiar language, before they can be made as intel-

ligible to the inexperienced and occasional student, as they are in their original shape to the exercised disputant. To assert therefore universally of Scripture, that, as being the revelation of infinite wisdom, it can need no explanation or comment whatsoever for the purpose of making it intelligible to all classes of readers, is evidently a mistatement of the practical fact, from a misconception of the question. Our dispute is not so much with regard to the intrinsic clearness of the truths themselves, when fully and adequately announced, as with the imperfect mode and vehicle by which those momentous truths are necessarily conveyed to the parties for whose instruction we are solicitous. The most perfect revelation of the divine will can, after all, be transmitted to our minds only through the very uncertain medium of human language, the standard of which even in one and the same nation varies from age to age; and practical doctrines which were completely intelligible to the humblest capacities, so long as they bore upon existent and established usages of society, must of necessity become to a certain degree obscure in proportion as those usages give

place to, and are superseded by, others entirely dissimilar.

In alluding however to those difficulties which time and accident have introduced into the sacred volume, I am far from asserting that the original work itself is so entirely free from obscurity, as many truly good men, in their zeal for the cause of religion, have been disposed to maintain. Close and profound reasoning, such as we find in the Apostolical Epistles, and more especially in those of St. Paul, can not be immediately pursued and assented to by the average understandings of mankind, even where the subject matter embraces only the ordinary problems of human knowledge; much less can we expect that it will be uniformly intelligible where the points under discussion are the transcendental mysteries of God's providence; and where the inspired mind of the writer, itself perfectly familiarized with these profound topics, glances from one head of argument to another with a fluent rapidity of apprehension with which the most highly gifted of his readers ineffectually strives to keep pace.

These impediments, however, to the due

interpretation of Scripture are after all as nothing when compared with those superadded difficulties which necessarily attend the substitution of modern translations in the place of the original text. The transfusion of the doctrines contained in the several inspired writings into a language such as ours, differing in its whole construction so entirely from those in which they were first conveyed, has been a source of fresh obscurity which, paradoxical as it may appear, has in some cases been increased in exact proportion to the caution and accuracy with which the various translators have performed their work. The total diversity of idiom which distinguishes one language from another, and more especially the ancient from the modern, presents an insuperable barrier against every attempt to translate *literally* any work of considerable length, so as to preserve at the same time actual identity of expression and that perspicuity of idea which is necessary to put us into complete possession of the sentiments of the original writer.

The remark which is as clear as the light when conveyed in its own vernacular idiom, is

often obscurity itself when harshly but closely rendered without accommodation to the peculiar phraseology of other nations. Every person who has been in the habit of referring to the original Greek for the explanation of those passages of the Apostolical Epistles which appear intricate and obscure in our English version must have had continual occasion to observe the justness of this assertion. An expression may have been unexceptionably rendered word for word, yet for want of accordance with the structure and associations of our own language it will often be nearly unintelligible in its English dress, where the Greek shall present no difficulty whatever. Examples to this effect may be collected in abundance from almost every page of the compositions in question. Take, for instance, that part of the concluding paragraph of the second Epistle to the Thessalonians, in which St. Paul states, that his genuine letters may always be recognized as such, from the fact of the valedictory salutation being his own autograph, and written in a peculiar character, the form of which he begs may be attentively examined. Nothing can be clearer than the statement

as conveyed in the original Greek, Ὁ ἀσπασμὸς τῇ ἐμῇ χειρὶ Παυλοῦ, ὅ ἐστι σημεῖον ἐν πάσῃ ἐπιστολῇ· οὕτω γράφω. Yet the English version, though scrupulously exact in point of form, scarcely suggests any definite idea to a reader whose literature does not extend beyond our own language. "The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every Epistle: so I write." The defect here is evidently a too great attention to verbal accuracy; yet where the subject matter of exposition is the inspired word of God, it is not very obvious what latitude of expression can be safely allowed to persons specially appointed to transmit it to the unlearned, pure from any admixture of human theory as they first received it.

This difficulty accordingly, which may always be evaded or obviated in the case of the works of profane literature by adopting at will other modes of expression more in accordance with the associations of the translator, and of the nation for whose benefit the version is intended, presses, on the contrary, heavily, because inevitably, wherever the object is to afford a faithful and accurate interpretation of the words of holy writ.

The reverential awe which a conscientious translator necessarily feels under such a solemn responsibility as that now alluded to with regard to the doctrines which he is called upon to clothe in a new dress, is an effectual impediment, where his translation is to emanate *under the sanction of legislative authority*, to his taking those elsewhere allowed liberties, which in rendering the works of other writers are often no less essential for conveying the full meaning, than they are for preserving the spirit and manner, of the original. The disadvantages therefore under which our own, and every other, *established* version of many parts of Scripture must be admitted to labour, are more easy to be lamented than remedied. That the learned and good men, to whom we owe that great and invaluable work, executed the task entrusted to them with judgment and fidelity, is beyond dispute. Nor can we do otherwise than applaud also the integrity of the persons in authority, who, when a translation into our own language of the word of God was rendered necessary by the diffusion of Protestantism, took due care that no bias of human passion should be allowed to tamper

with its minutest parts under the plea of exposition or improvement. Whilst however these considerations suggest an ample vindication of the manner in which that work was executed, they afford but an insufficient consolation for the disadvantages to which an undertaking so circumstanced must be inevitably liable. If accordingly it be incumbent, as it assuredly is, upon the temporal and ecclesiastical government of the country to promulgate nothing, directly or indirectly, as the word of God but that which is undoubtedly and demonstrably such; then, most assuredly, must individual exertion step in to execute upon its own personal responsibility and risk that which, however indispensable for the adequate instruction of the majority of readers, cannot with propriety emanate from any higher source. A large supply of helps of this description has in consequence been afforded during the course of the last and the present centuries by some of our foremost divines and scholars for the better apprehension of the holy Scriptures, no small portion of whose labours has reference to the very writings which it is the object of this volume to illustrate. Still how-

ever the work here presented to the public will not, I trust, be without its use. Of the many paraphrases and translations of the Apostolical Epistles which have already appeared, most are arranged in a form which renders them more fit for occasional reference than for continuous perusal: whilst some, intended chiefly for the assistance of the minutely critical scholar, however admirably adapted for that purpose, are ill calculated to meet the wants of general readers. For the use of this last-mentioned and most important portion of the Christian community a translation appears to me to be still wanting, which should be sufficiently close to convey an adequate idea of the manner in which the Apostolical Epistles were originally written, yet also sufficiently diffuse—to give breadth and prominence to those minute but necessary links of reasoning which are often so cursorily glanced at by the writers as to escape the observation of persons not in the habit of pursuing an elaborate argument through its finest details;—to fill up those lacunæ of inference, the implied purport of which, though necessarily suggested by the context to the experienced dialectician, does

not always present itself to others less exercised in this species of elliptical composition; —and to supply that fluency of context, by which even the languid and desultory reader, when indisposed to the labour of intense thought, may be enabled to take a comprehensive view of the whole chain of the argument, and of the object, of the writer. Without such a complete and general view, which can only be obtained by the perusal of an entire Epistle at one single sitting, it is not only impossible to derive from it that exact impression which it was intended to convey, but it is even scarcely possible for the clearest mind to avoid some degree of misapprehension of its real purport. When the reader is entangled and detained by the statement of objections which may be opposed to one branch of an argument, yet wants leisure to pass on to the remainder of the context in which those objections are answered, and consequently is compelled to derive his knowledge piece-meal, deprived of its due proportions, and of its unity of design, not the most sincere rectitude of purpose can prevent the adoption of partial and unsound theories. There is also, we may

observe, a morbid curiosity in the human mind which loves mysticism for its own sake; and which, glancing thoughtlessly over the most important truths, which, perhaps on account of their extreme importance, are clearly announced, is ever returning to ponder again and again over those perplexing speculations for which it imagines that it finds a warrant in some detached and isolated fragment of Scripture.

The only effective mode of counteracting this unsafe tendency is, by diminishing, so far as circumstances will permit, the obscurity in which such passages are involved. That something may be done in this way by the means already alluded to, is perfectly obvious. No one surely would hesitate to allow, that, where the literal rendering of the idiom of an extinct language into our own would suggest scarcely any, or perhaps only an inaccurate, idea to the minds of the unlearned; or where customs are alluded to with which scholars alone are supposed to be familiar, in such cases the alteration of a single word, or the appending of a short commentary, may supply all the aid requisite. But these, as has been already remarked,

are not the only difficulties which a little attention may effectually remove. St. Paul, for instance, not unfrequently quotes a few words only from some passage in the Old Testament, where, from the context of the argument, it is demonstrable that he had in his mind the purport of the whole clause alluded to. An exposition therefore which fills up his meaning by the insertion of the entire paragraph undoubtedly affords considerable help for the apprehension of the point under discussion. Again, like an experienced and subtle disputant, he often advances, as in his own person, plausible but fallacious arguments, or anticipates the objections of his opponent, for the purpose of refuting them. But, however clear such a mode of reasoning may be to the learned, it is self-evident that to the mere reader for spiritual edification, especially to those who are unequal to the effort of studying more than short and detached passages on any one occasion, it will sometimes be attended with considerable perplexity. The elucidation of such passages therefore, by the insertion of a few words which shall give prominence to the writer's object, and leave

nothing for the ingenuity of the reader to surmise or fill up, must of course have a tendency to promote that fluent readiness of perception, which is so absolutely necessary for arriving at the real purport of the revealed word of God. The last, but perhaps the most efficient, means which I have adopted for the purpose of restoring this truly invaluable portion of the inspired volume to its original clearness, is by discarding the commonly received, though almost universally reprobated, division into chapters and verses; a division which, though useful for occasional reference, has been so capriciously executed by its first contrivers, and with so little regard or attention to the bearings of the context, that it is perhaps no exaggeration to say of it, that it has done more to mislead the attention and perplex the judgment of the student than any, or all, of the causes of occasional obscurity already alluded to.

Such is the humble and unostentatious help which the present volume is intended to convey. Of course, therefore, it is not, nor does it profess to be, a critical work, in the strict meaning of that term. It has in-

deed been my anxious endeavour, as it was my duty, to select the true sense of the writer to the best of my power and judgment in those few controverted cases which have afforded so much occupation, with some occasional difference of opinion, to the learned. Still, however, it was not this species of elucidation which suggested the inducement to this undertaking. My wish has been to assist, not the learned, who can derive little benefit from my exertions, but the religious community under its widest designation; by placing in the hands of any casual readers an exposition which may save to them that continuous labour of thought, the necessity of which renders more particularly this portion of the word of God always a difficult, and consequently to many an irksome, task. How far I may have attained my object it is not for me to surmise. One consolation, be the fate of this volume what it may, I shall at all events derive from the conviction, that, whatever may be the defects which inadvertence or error may have admitted into it, the design of it is one well suited to the wants of the age in which we live; and that, should I be found to have

failed in the due execution of my plan, others will assuredly not be wanting to undertake it under better auspices, and to perform it with superior ability.

THE

EPISTLE OF PAUL

TO THE

ROMANS.

THE Epistle to the Romans has generally been considered as having been addressed by St. Paul to the Jewish converts to Christianity resident in Rome; but from the tenor of several passages, particularly of that impressive and eloquent exhortation directed to the believing Gentiles in the latter part of the eleventh chapter, it seems more probable that the Apostle intended his communication for the benefit of the whole Christian fraternity in that city. It may be observed, as strengthening this opinion, that the names of the persons to whom his salutation is addressed in the concluding chapter are chiefly such as denote an Italian or Greek parentage. This Epistle appears to have been written at Corinth; and, as is generally supposed, about the year 58 of the Christian era, during St. Paul's second visit into Greece, and subsequently to his composition of the second Epistle to the Corinthians.

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

1 PAUL, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an
apostle, set apart for the preaching the Gospel of
2 God (which he promised of old by his prophets in
3 the holy Scriptures) concerning his Son, who was
born of the seed of David according to the flesh,
4 and declared to be the Son of God in power, ac-
cording to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection
5 of the dead, namely Jesus Christ our Lord; by
whom we have received grace and apostleship for
teaching submission to the faith among all nations,
6 through his name, among whom are ye also, the
7 called of Jesus Christ;—to all the beloved of God
in Rome, called to be his saints, grace and peace
be to you from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus
Christ.

SECTION I.

Salvation is to be obtained only through the covenant of *faith*.

8 In the first place I thank my God through Jesus
Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of
9 throughout all the world. For God is my witness,
whom I serve in my spirit preaching the Gospel of
his Son, how incessantly I bear you in my thoughts,
10 always intreating in my prayers that I may now at
length by the will of God have a prosperous jour-
11 ney to come unto you. For I am anxious to see
you that I may impart to you some spiritual gift for

the confirming you in the faith: that is, that I may 12
be comforted, together with you, through our joint
persuasion of the sincerity of our mutual belief.
For I wish you to be assured, brethren, that I have 13
often purposed coming to you (though I have been
prevented up to this present time) in order that I
might reap some fruit amongst you, as I have al-
ready done amongst the other Gentiles. For, as an 14
apostle of the Gentiles, it is my duty to preach the
Gospel to Greeks and to Barbarians; to the learned
and to the ignorant; I am therefore ready accord- 15
ing to my ability to preach also to you in Rome.
For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, 16
which is the power of God displaying itself for the
salvation of every one who believes in it: of the
Jew in the first place, and after him of the Gentile
also.

For in it is revealed that righteousness of God, 17
which, having its first beginning and foundation in faith, is finally perfected in faith: as it is written,
(Habakkuk ii. 4.) He who is justified by *faith* shall
live.

SECTION II.

The apostle, in order to prove the universal necessity of salvation through *faith*, proceeds to shew that no human beings whatever, whether Gentiles or Jews, have attained to righteousness by *works*. And this he illustrates, in the first place, by the instance of the Gentiles, who have uniformly sinned against their better knowledge, as afforded by *the light of nature*.

For the anger of God is denounced from heaven 18
against all the impiety and injustice of mankind

whatsoever, who, notwithstanding their better knowledge of the truth and of their duty, wilfully perse-
19 vere in the practice of unrighteousness. Nor can any, whether Jew or Gentile, plead ignorance of their duty as their excuse for their neglect of it, inasmuch as the knowledge of God is manifested, even to the perceptions of the Gentiles themselves, by the natural faculties which God has given them.
20 For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and Godhead, have been distinctly perceivable by mankind, through his material works, from the first commencement of the world. Therefore
21 are they necessarily without excuse, since, knowing him by the certain light of reason to be God, they have not honoured him as God ought to be honoured, nor thanked him as God ought to be thanked: but have become vain and foolish in their reasonings respecting him: and thus their inapprehensive minds grew dark and bewildered;
22 23 pretending to wisdom they became fools, and, blinded by a senseless superstition, finally converted the glory of the imperishable Godhead into the likeness of perishable man, of birds, of beasts,
24 of reptiles. Wherefore God in his turn gave them up, by a just retribution through their own grovelling desires, to uncleanness, and to the dishonouring of their own bodies by licentious in-
25 dulgence; as being persons who had converted the eternal truths of his holy nature into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather

than Him their great Creator, who is blessed for ever and ever. Amen. For this reason He 26
abandoned them to the pollution of their impure passions; so that their very women, as their own annals will testify, have learned to change their natural affections into passions against nature; and the men, abandoning the natural use of the 27
woman, have burned with lust for one another, males with males practising abomination, and receiving, as was fit, the awful retribution of a darkened understanding. And, as they did not 28
choose to seek after the true knowledge of God's nature[a], God gave them up to a reckless mind, to

[a] It is worthy of observation, that the apostle in this passage directly asserts the competency of unassisted human reason to arrive at tolerably accurate conclusions respecting the perfections of the divine Being, and of the accuracy of our natural perceptions in the great questions of morals. Without the possession of such intuitive knowledge, he justly argues that the heathen world could not be considered as responsible agents in the sight of God. Strange to say however, this seemingly self-evident doctrine, which would appear to require no other proof than the internal consciousness of every reflecting person, has been opposed even in our own times by some of the ablest and most sincere champions of Christianity. That the captious schools of ancient philosophy should have occasionally made this question a subject for the display of a false ingenuity, and have taught that the distinctions of right and wrong were not referable to any moral sense within us, and had no other origin than the enactments of legislators

29 do all things which are unseemly: being filled
with every kind of unrighteousness[b], with forni-
cation, baseness, avarice, malice, envy, murder,
strife, treachery, malignity; and becoming whis-
30 perers, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, domi-
neering, boasters, inventors of wickedness, disobe-
31 dient to parents; without right perceptions, covenant

founded upon mere principles of expediency, need not perhaps be matter of wonder. Τὸ δίκαιον εἶναι καὶ τὸ αἰσχρὸν οὐ φύσει, ἀλλὰ νόμῳ. But one cannot but be surprised that so acute and truly pious a mind as that of Dr. Paley should have given its sanction to an opinion not very dissimilar. The unhesitating assent which it was the fashion of the writers of the last century to give to the theory of Locke and others respecting our bodily senses as being the exclusive vehicle of all our knowledge, has probably contributed much to the prevalence of these notions: but it seems now to be generally admitted, that that theory, though undoubtedly true in a certain sense, must at all events be understood with considerable modifications. When admitted without limitation in its broadest and most literal interpretation, its tendency undoubtedly is to obscure our apprehension of the divine attributes, and to overthrow the internal evidences of religion as deducible from its accordance with what we should conceive probable respecting the will of a perfectly good supreme Being.

[b] The recollection of every classical scholar will readily suggest to him abundant proofs, taken from the most enlightened ages of heathen antiquity, of the accuracy of this portraiture of pagan morals as delineated by the apostle.

breakers, without the kindly affections, implacable,
merciless: who knowing by the natural light of 32
their own consciences the moral attributes and
righteousness of God, and that they who practise
such offences as these are worthy of death, not
only themselves persevere in the commission of
them, but encourage others to do the same.

Wherefore even you, O man, who in the fancied 2
superiority of moral wisdom condemn others for
these things, are yourself without an excuse: for
in condemning another you convict yourself, inas-
much as you in your practice commit those very
things which you disapprove in others. God's 2
judgments we are assured will be exercised with
truth and impartiality against all unrighteousness.
Can you then hope, that whilst you yourself com- 3
mit what your own natural understanding enables
you to condemn in others, that you shall escape the
all-seeing eye of God? or are you trifling with the 4
abundance of his goodness, and forbearance, and
slowness to anger, not perceiving that it is the
object of that forbearance to afford you the means
and opportunity of repentance, and thus to bring
you finally to salvation? But be assured, that by 5
this hardness and impenitence of heart you are
laying up for yourself wrath against the day of
wrath; when the righteousness of God's dispensa-
tions shall be finally manifested, and when He 6
shall repay to every man according to his work;
to those who by perseverance in good conduct seek 7

for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life;
whilst, on the other hand, for the self-willed, for
those who are disobedient to the truth, and slaves
9 to unrighteousness, is reserved wrath and anger, tri-
bulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that
works wickedness; for the Jew in the first place,
10 and afterwards for the Greek and the Gentile. But
glory, and honour, and peace to every man that
works righteousness, to the Jew in the first place,
and afterward to the Greek and to the Gentile
also.

11 For there is no preference of nation or individual,
12 no partiality or injustice with God: but whosoever
has sinned against the law of nature shall be con-
demned and perish by the law of nature; and
whosoever shall have sinned against the written
law of Moses, shall in like manner be condemned
16 and perish by the law of Moses, [c] on that day when
God shall lay open the secrets of every breast by
Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of that
Gospel which I preach.

13 For it is not the mere hearers of the law (whether
that law be of nature or of Moses) who are just in

[c] I have ventured to take the 16th verse out of its regular order, and to place it immediately after the 12th, for the purpose of avoiding the obscurity resulting from the parenthetical insertion of the 13th, 14th, and 15th verses between them, as it exists in the original. The sense of the passage of course remains unaltered.

the sight of God, but the sincere doers of the commandments of the law are they who shall be finally justified.

For when the Gentiles, to whom the law of 14
Moses was never communicated, do, by the mere light of nature, the precepts of the revealed law, they, without the aid of a more express revelation, are a law and a rule of conduct to themselves: inasmuch as they shew the works of the law en- 15
graved upon their hearts, their consciences meanwhile bearing witness to them, and their moral speculations one with another confirming or correcting its decisions.

SECTION III.

Having shewn that the Gentile world have failed of attaining the righteousness which is by *works*, the Apostle proceeds, in the second place, to prove the same result with respect to the Jews, who sought to obtain salvation by performance of the ceremonial observances, and by obedience to the moral precepts, of the Mosaic covenant.

But you will say perhaps, "Why urge *me* with 17
what I most readily acknowledge, namely, that the Gentile world has uniformly fallen short of complete moral righteousness? What have *you* to do with that admission; *you* who profess yourself a Jew, and rest your claim to holiness upon the righteousness of the *written law*, and boast of your more complete knowledge of God, and of his will, and 18
have a more perfect rule of duty than the Gentiles, deriving, as you do, your instruction from the divine precepts delivered to Moses?" And accord- 19

ingly under this presumption you feel confidence in yourself that you are a leader of the blind, a light
20 to those who are in darkness, the instructor of the ignorant, a teacher of babes, having for your guide the summary of divine knowledge and truth con-
21 tained in a code derived from heaven itself.—"What then?" let me ask in my turn, "you who teach others, do you not teach yourself?" You who pro-
22 claim, "Thou shalt not steal," do you steal? You who say, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," do you commit adultery? You that abhor idols, do you
23 commit sacrilege? You who boast of the excellence of your divine law, do you by transgressing that
24 same law dishonour God? For assuredly, as it is truly written of you by the prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel, "through you the name of God is blasphemed amongst the Gentiles."

25 Admitting then that your boasted circumcision would be of real profit to you, provided you were to perform all the conditions of that law of which it is the symbol, yet if, instead of so doing, you become a wilful violater of that law which you profess to revere, your circumcision becomes in no respect
26 better than the uncircumcision of the Gentiles; and if so, then surely by a parity of reason we may pronounce of the uncircumcised Gentile, that, if his moral practice be in all respects conformable to the precepts of your law, his uncircumcision shall be as available to him in the sight of God as the cir-
27 cumcision of the Jew. Nay, may we not carry the

argument still further, and venture to assert, that the uncircumcision of him who, instructed only in the law of nature, shall have performed the moral duties enjoined by Moses, shall sit in judgment upon you, who, being a Jew only by the letter and circumcision, are by your actions a violater of that very law which you profess to honour? For he is 28
not a Jew in the sight of God who is only one outwardly; nor is that the true circumcision which is only the outward sign marked upon the flesh: but 29
it is the inwardly sincere Jew only who in reality deserves the title; and that only is the true circumcision which is the circumcision of the heart, impressed upon the spirit, and not existing in the mere literal fulfilment of an external ceremony. The commendation of which is not from men, but from God.

But you will ask then: "If so, what after all is 3
the boasted superiority of the Jew over the Gentile, and what is the advantage of that circumcision which we know to have been of divine appointment?" I answer, "Much in every respect. For, in the 2
first place, to the Jews, as God's chosen people, were entrusted the oracles of the will of God." But if many of the Jewish nation have wilfully 3
forfeited their privilege as God's favoured nation by their unbelief and rejection of his covenant, does their violation of their part of that covenant make God untrue to *his* promise, when he withdraws from them that peculiar protection which was given to them on the condition of their obedience? By no 4

means. Let God be found faithful to his word, though every man be found a liar; as it is written in the fifty-first Psalm, "That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and prevail when thou art judged."

5 But you will say perhaps, "Where after all is the great evil of our sins, if the effect would be only to attach disgrace upon ourselves, and to make the superior faithfulness of God in his observance of the covenant made with our forefathers more manifest by the comparison? Is not God," it may be plausibly urged, "unjust in visiting with severity the rebellion of the Jews, from which no injury 6 could possible accrue to himself?" Yet this very argument, if correct, would prove, that, because no actual injury can accrue to God from the sins of the human race, therefore "he will *never judge the world at all*," which is directly contrary to our con- 7 viction of his purity and justice. But perhaps you will urge again, "If the truth and glory of God is only made more manifest by its contrast with the faithlessness of us Jews with regard to the covenant which he has made with us, why should he cast us off and reject us solely for a disobedience, which, however it may disgrace ourselves, has actually redounded to his credit, and to the increase of his 8 glory?"—Yet this very argument again if true would justify the maxim which we are slanderously asserted by our enemies to adopt, "*that it is lawful to*

do evil in order that good may ensue," a sentiment revolting to the first principles of morals.

" What then," you will ask, " are we Jews in no 9
respect morally better in the sight of God than the Gentiles?" I answer, " in none whatever." For I have already proved that all men indiscriminately, both Jews and Gentiles, are involved in the guilt of sin. As it is written in the fourteenth Psalm, 10
" There is no one without sin: no not one: there 11
is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh God: all have gone out of their way, they 12
are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no not one. Their throat is an 13
open sepulchre, with their tongues they have used deceit: the poison of asps is under their lips. Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: 14
their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and 15 16
misery are in their ways, and the way of peace they 17
have not known: there is no fear of God before 18
their eyes." Now we know that these denuncia- 19
tions which are contained in the book of the Jewish scriptures are addressed personally and exclusively to the Jews as sinners; in order that every mouth, both Jew and Gentile, might be stopped, and the whole world be found guilty before God. Where- 20
fore by the performance of the works of the law, whether it be that of nature or that of Moses, no flesh whatever shall stand acquitted and justified in his sight: on the contrary, it is from those very

precepts of the law which teach us our duty that we first learned the knowledge, and consequently acquired the capability of the commission, of sin.

SECTION IV.

It having been proved by the foregoing arguments that the whole human race are involved in one common condemnation in the sight of God, it necessarily follows that salvation can be attained only *through the covenant of mercy communicated to us through the merits of Christ.* This new dispensation accordingly the Apostle declares to be now offered to the whole of mankind indiscriminately, whether Jews or Gentiles.

21 But now, at length, in these latter days, the righteousness and mercy of God, which is not extreme to measure our conduct by the strict letter of the written law, has been finally revealed to mankind; a dispensation long ago announced by Moses
22 and the Prophets, and now accomplished in that covenant of righteousness and mercy extended by the faithfulness of Christ to all those, without discrimination, who have unreserved faith and reliance
23 on him. For all men have sinned and come short
24 of the glory of God, being justified gratuitously, and without any effective merit on their part, by his mercy only, through the redemption which is in
25 Jesus Christ. whom God set forth as a propitiation through faith in his blood, for the display and vindication of his own unblemished righteousness in passing over former offences by his long and
26 patient forbearance: and also for the manifestation of his own justice and mercy at this present mo-

ment, by shewing himself to be just, yet at the same time justifying freely every one who has faith in Jesus.

Where then is boasting? It is excluded. By 27
what dispensation? by that of human merit and of works? By no means: but by the dispensation of faith in our Redeemer. Here then is our conclu- 28
sion, namely, "*that a man is justified and rendered acceptable to God by faith in the merits of his Redeemer only, and not by the merit of his own performance of the works of the law.*"

Shall we presume to say that God is the God of 29
the Jews only, and not also of the Gentiles? Most assuredly he is the God of the Gentiles also: inas- 30
much as he is one and the same God, who will alike justify both Jew and Gentile by the covenant of 31
faith. Are we then declaring the moral law of works to be useless because we teach that redemption is through faith only? Far otherwise; on the con- 32
trary, we are confirming and bearing our testimony to the necessity of that law; inasmuch as it was our inadequate performance of that too perfect law for human practice which rendered the dispensation of faith in a Redeemer necessary.

SECTION V.

The Apostle proceeds to prove, that the covenant of mercy through faith extends to the Gentile world no less than to the Jews, from the fact that the divine promise made to Abraham was the reward of his reliance on God's protection before he had received the rite of circumcision, and consequently before he could be considered as exclusively representing the Jewish nation.

4 If however righteousness is through faith only,
what are we to say of the example of our father
2 Abraham? for if he was justified by his own works,
his boast will have been in the merit of those
works, and not in the imputed righteousness of
3 God communicated through faith. What says the
Scripture on this subject? Abraham "trusted in
God, and *that was counted to him for righteousness.*"
4 But the reward of a man who has completely per-
formed his duty in all its parts is one of *debt*, and
5 of *absolute right;* not one of *mercy and favour.* But
to him whose works have been inadequate, but who
throws himself upon the mercy of him who can
justify the sinner, it is *faith alone, and not adequate*
performance, which is accounted to him for righteous-
6 *ness.* And according to this view of the question
is it that David in the thirty-second Psalm describes
the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes
righteousness without the merit arising from works.
7 "Blessed are they whose violations of the law are
8 forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is
the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin."
9 Is this blessedness then to the circumcised Jews
only, or to the uncircumcised Gentiles also? For
we say that faith was imputed to Abraham for
10 righteousness. In answer to this question I ask,
"At what time, and on what occasion, was it so
imputed to him?" Refer to the sacred writings,
and we shall find it to have been not *after* but
11 *before* his receiving the rite of circumcision. And

he *afterwards* received the mark of circumcision as a seal of that previous righteousness through faith which he had shewn when uncircumcised: in order that he might be considered the father of the believing Gentiles also, that righteousness may be imputed through faith to them as well as to the Jews: and the father of circumcision to those not 12
of the circumcision only, but to all whosoever walk in the track of that faith in God which he, our father Abraham, had before his circumcision.

For the promise to Abraham or to his seed, "that 13
he should be the heir of the world," was not as a reward of his, or their, perfect obedience to the law of works, but through the imputed righteousness of faith in God. For if those only are after all to be 14
heirs to the promise whose obedience to the law of works has been complete, faith, in the first place, becomes of no value, and, secondly, the promise of God, in consequence of the unworthiness of mankind, is made without effect. For the law of per- 15
fect works, if rigorously insisted on, would lead *not to reward*, but *to punishment:* whilst on the other hand, where law is not, as there can be no transgression, so consequently can there be no punishment.

The inheritance therefore to which we look is 16
through "faith," that it may be a covenant of *mercy*, and that accordingly the promise may be secure to all the seed of our common father Abraham, whether Jew or Gentile; not to that part of

it only which claims its descent from him under the exclusive limitations of the law, but to that also which follows him as their great spiritual example
17 in the righteousness of faith: as it is written, (Gen. xvii. 5.) "I have made thee a father of many nations:" a promise confirmed to him whilst he stood in the presence of that God who can raise the dead to life, and who calls the things as yet unborn as
18 though they already existed. And thus, with this humble reliance, Abraham firmly believed in the divine promise, for what then seemed impossible to all human calculation, that he should be the father of many nations, according to that which was declared to him by God, (Gen. xv. 5.) "Thy seed
19 shall be as the stars of heaven for multitude." And accordingly, being firm in faith, he did not consider the improbability of his having children at his very advanced age, for he was then about an hundred
20 years old, nor the great age of Sarah. Therefore he did not expostulate through disbelief with this promise of God, but was strong in faith, giving
21 God the glory; and being fully persuaded that He
22 is able to perform all that he had promised. *And it was the undoubting sincerity of this faith which was imputed to him for righteousness.*

23 Now, that "it was thus imputed to him for righteousness" was not written for his sake alone,
24 but for ours also, to whom righteousness shall also be imputed in like manner, if we believe as firmly in him who raised Jesus Christ our Lord from the

dead. Who was delivered to death for our of- 25
fences, and was raised again for our justification.

Therefore being justified by faith we have peace 5
with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: through 2
whose merits we have access by faith to this covenant of mercy in which we now stand: and exult in the hope that we shall one day be admitted to see the glory of God. And not only so, but we 3
exult also even in our present afflictions, knowing that affliction produces patience, and patience our 4
spiritual improvement, and our spiritual improvement hope: and this hope makes us not ashamed, 5
because we know it be a well-grounded consciousness of the love of God poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which is given to us.

For when we were yet in all the infirmity of sin, 6
Christ in his own good time died for sinners. (Now even for a *good* man we should scarcely find 7
any one who would willingly lay down his life, though for a truly good man perhaps persons may be found who would make such a sacrifice;) but 8
God shews the immensity of his own love towards us, in that Christ died for us *even whilst we were in the very midst of our sins.* Much more then, now 9
that we have been justified by the expiation of his blood, may we confidently hope to be saved through him from the divine wrath. For if, whilst we were 10
yet enemies to God by our sins we became reconciled to him through the death of his Son, much more, now that we *are* reconciled, may we calculate

upon our salvation through that Son's restoration to
11 life: nay we even exult in this view of the mercies of God as communicated to us through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received this reconciliation.

12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death in consequence of sin, and thus all became subject to death, because all have sinned,
13 (for sin prevailed in the world from the time of Adam to that of Moses, though sin is not imputed to those who have sinned through ignorance of the
14 law[d]: and yet, be that as it may, death, the consequence of sin, has certainly attached to all men whatsoever during the whole of that period, and even to those who have not sinned knowingly as Adam had done,) it will appear that this first Adam, by the universality of the penalty which he brought upon mankind by his individual guilt, is in that respect a type of the second Adam, who by his individual merits procured an universality of expia-

[d] The Apostle's meaning in this passage seems to be, that, although the physical consequences of Adam's sin have been the natural tendency to dissolution in all his posterity without exception by the inevitable decay of the body, yet that that transgression will not be imputed as a spiritual condemnation to such as shall have been incapable, whether from ignorance or any other preventive cause of the actual commission of wilful sin in their own persons, as in the case of idiots, or of children who die in their infancy.

tion. But yet with this marked and important 15
difference; that, not as was the offence of Adam, so
was the mercy of Christ[e]. For if by the sins of

[e] It has been a favourite objection with unbelievers against the internal evidence of Christianity, that the doctrine of imputed sin as descending from Adam, and attaching to his posterity, is inconsistent with every notion of the divine justice. The weight of this objection is considerably diminished by the admission of the apostle, that "where no law has been promulgated, sin is not imputed," an admission which, as was observed in the preceding note, would encourage us to infer that God will not charge with sin such individuals of the human race as shall have been by insuperable necessity cut off from the means of better knowledge. But another answer to this charge is that which St. Paul now proceeds to urge; namely, that admitting to the fullest extent the imputation of Adam's guilt to his posterity, still its operation will not be more wide than that of the imputed righteousness of Christ, by which the responsibility attaching to us from the fall of our first parent is effectually done away. The analogy and harmony of revelation therefore in this, as in a vast number of other cases, *when considered as a whole*, affords a satisfactory solution of the peculiar difficulty suggested by an examination of *a part only*. If it be urged, however, that the operation of Adam's fall was universal in its effects, but that of the atonement of Christ conditional, and dependent upon the lives and conduct of the persons claiming to be benefited by it, we may observe in reply, that at all events we infer from Scripture that the offer of salvation through Christ is made indiscriminately to all mankind; and that although we have good reason to fear the final rejection of many through their

one, many died, who might otherwise have lived, much more has the mercy of God, and the free gift of redemption by the one man Jesus Christ, abounded for the salvation of many who were other-
16 wise lost. And not, as was the penalty of one man's sin, so was the free gift by the merits of Christ. For the sentence against Adam was condemnation to all through the offence of *one:* but the mercy through Christ was a transition from
17 the offences of *many* to justification. For if, by the transgression of one, death reigned over the whole world through that one, much more shall they who embrace the exuberance of the divine mercy and the free gift of justification reign in life through one, our Lord Jesus Christ.

disobedience, still that circumstance involves no more perplexing an admission than, that a God of infinite purity must necessarily disapprove of and punish all cases of gross and persevering immorality. Had our first parents remained innocent, we have no reason to infer that their posterity would never have sinned, and consequently have never forfeited their privileges, precisely as mankind may at this moment lose by their own guilt and folly the imputed righteousness purchased for them by the sacrifice of Christ. If there be any difference as to the actual extent of the two cases, St. Paul justly argues, that the preponderance is clearly on that side where under the government of a good Providence we might naturally expect to find it: namely, on that of mercy. A benevolent Creator may be presumed to incli unwillingly to measures of even just severity, but we n safely infer that he will display no repugnance to the a tion of *consistent* goodness to any possible exten

Therefore, as the effects of one man's offence were 18
the condemnation of all men, so by the righteous-
ness of one is the communication of the justification
of life made to all mankind. For as by one man's 19
disobedience many became sinners, so, by the obe-
dience of one, many shall be made righteous.

SECTION VI.

The law of perfect morality, whether it be that suggested by the light of natural religion as in the case of the Gentiles, or that contained in the Levitical code as in the case of the Jews, so far from being able to correct the original depravity of man's nature, the consequence of the fall of our first parents, has on the contrary a tendency rather to increase his liability to sin; the multiplication of its enactments being in fact so many additional occasions afforded to him of displaying his disobedience. This being an objection against the efficacy of every attempt at merely *legal* justification in the sight of God, when applied to the case of infirm moral agents, which must operate more and more fatally precisely in proportion to the increased purity of the enactments which such a law would enforce, it appears to follow as an evident consequence, that our final responsibility can be effectually done away only by a dispensation constructed upon the principle of *mercy* and *imputed righteousness*. Such a dispensation however the apostle urges can never be supposed to supersede the original obligations of morality, since its object is to supply the inevitable deficiencies in human actions, and not to dispense with our best possible exertions. On the contrary, it affords the highest and most urgent motive, upon every principle whether of gratitude or of absolute obligation, to a life of purity and spiritual holiness.

And the moral law by its introduction only 20
served to multiply offences through man's disobe-
dience: but, where offences have abounded, mercy
has much more abounded. That as sin reigned 21

over the whole world by introducing death, so mercy might reign through the righteousness which is from God, to the introduction of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

6 What then; shall we abandon the pursuit of moral purity, and continue in the practice of those sins which the law disclaims, because the covenant which we look to is one of grace and mercy, and
2 not of rigorous retribution? By no means. How shall we who are dead to sin any longer live in
3 the commission of it? Know ye not that as many of us as were baptized to Christ Jesus were bap-
4 tized to his death? We have therefore been buried with him as to all the affections of this sinful world, inasmuch as we have been baptized to his death: to the end that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also, being
5 dead to sin, might walk in newness of life. For, if we have been planted together with him in the likeness of his death, so we shall bear the same blessed fruit with him in the likeness of his resur-
6 rection: knowing this, that our original carnal nature was crucified together with him, in order that the body which was subject to sinful affections
7 might be done away, and that we should no longer
8 be enslaved by sin. But if we have died with Christ, we trust that we shall also live eternally
9 together with him, knowing that Christ being raised from the dead henceforward dies no more: death
10 has no longer dominion over him. For in dying,

he died unto sin once; but in living, he lives now unto God. In like manner do you consider your- 11
selves, even in this world, dead to sin, but living to God in Christ Jesus.

Let not then sin reign in your mortal body, so 12
that you should yield to it: nor render your mem- 13
bers instruments of iniquity through sin. But surrender yourselves to God as persons living as though you had been already raised from the dead, and let your members be instruments of holiness to God. Doing thus you may be assured that sin 14
shall not prevail against you; for you are no longer under the rigid law of adequate and perfect works, but under the covenant of grace and mercy. What 15
then: shall we wilfully sin, because we are no longer under the law of perfect works, but under the covenant of grace? By no means: know ye 16
not that to whatsoever dominion you wilfully subject yourselves, you render yourselves the slaves of, and tender your allegiance to, that dominion, whether it shall be of sin whose fruit is death, or obedience whose fruit is holiness? But thanks be 17
to God that, having been formerly the slaves of sin, you have now from your heart become obedient to the form of pure doctrine to which you were transferred: and being set free from the bondage of sin, 18
have become the slaves of holiness. (In speaking 19
thus I am using a homely and familiar illustration, in order to make myself clear to your understanding.) Wherefore as you have in time past made

your members slaves to impurity and to licentiousness whilst under the dominion of sin, so now render them slaves to holiness as being under the
20 dominion of purity. For when you were the slaves of sin you considered not yourselves subject to the
21 control of the rule of righteousness. And what fruit did you reap from that degrading bondage to your former master? fruit of which you are now ashamed; for the end of those things is death.
22 But now being set free from sin, and become servants of God, you have your fruit unto holiness;
23 and, for your final reward, everlasting life[f]. For

[f] This is the true philosophy of sound morality. Where the heart and inclinations are callous or corrupt, the understanding may be crowded with the noblest maxims of ethical wisdom, and men may be taught to declaim plausibly and learnedly upon the beauty of virtue, but no fruits of practical holiness will be the result. The inculcation however of such lessons is all that the purest schools of morals can achieve, without the awakening aid of revealed religion. Christianity adopts the contrary and far more effectual method, and, making its first appeal to the better affections of the heart, presumes that where they are effectually roused, the works of righteousness will necessarily follow. It is not therefore that it would derogate from the value, or deny the necessity, of good works, as some fanatics have impiously asserted, that it so earnestly inculcates faith as a primary principle, but because without the groundwork of faith the moral character possesses not the means of its own effectual developement. "A good tree," says our blessed Saviour, "bringeth not forth

the wages of sin is death: but the free gift of God is everlasting life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

In the next place, my brethren, let me remind 7
you that it is an established rule of the Mosaic law itself, with which I know you to be well acquainted, that a covenant is binding upon the contracting parties during their joint lives only, and no longer. Thus a woman is bound in duty to her husband, as 2
to a law which is to regulate her actions, until that husband's death; but after his death she is set free from that law to which she was before subject. If 3
then during her husband's life she marry another man, she is an adulteress: but, if her husband dies, she is set free from her former subjection, so that she no longer is to be considered an adulteress if she unite herself in a second marriage. In like 4
manner, my brethren, you have been set free by death from subjection to the law of Moses, through the sacrifice of the body of Christ, that you may now be married to another, even to him who was raised from the dead, that we might henceforward bring forth fruit not unto this world, but unto God. For when we were subject to the carnal law of 5
works, the evil propensities which we had under that covenant, worked in our members to bring forth fruit unto death: but now we are set free 6
from the rigorous stipulations of that law, that

corrupt fruit, neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit."

covenant being dead to which we were subject; so that we henceforward obey the new dispensation of spiritual holiness, not the cancelled letter of ritual expiations.

7 What shall we say then? Is that law, which God himself gave from mount Sinai, sinful? Far from it. But this I *do* say, that I should never have known the full nature of sin, and consequently should never have sinned completely against my better knowledge, had it not been for the prohibitions contained in the law. Thus, for instance, I should never have known the full enormity of a licentious appetite, if the law had not forbidden the
8 indulgence of those appetites. Sin therefore, taking its advantage of the very injunctions and prohibitions of the law wrought in me all manner of evil appetites and deliberate disobedience, for where there is neither injunction nor prohibition sin
9 cannot exist. So long then as I was ignorant of my duty, I might in a certain sense be said to live; but when I came to understand the moral obligations and unsullied purity of the law, then my sins
10 came into life[x], and I became spiritually dead: and

[x] It is an observation which St. Paul omits no opportunity of enforcing, and which should never be forgotten by those who would satisfy themselves that nothing short of such a dispensation as that of the Christian covenant could procure our effectual reconciliation with God, that the inculcation of the mere science of morals, though it may in a certain degree contribute to the external civilization of mankind and the

which cleaves to my nature which does it in my despite. I find then from my daily experience this 21
law in my constitution, that even where I am zealous to do good, even there I feel an accompanying and countervailing tendency to do evil. For with my 22
spiritual nature I sincerely delight in and assent to the pure commandments of God; whilst in my 23
members I feel a struggle against the conviction of my conscience, which enslaves me to that law of sin which prevails over my carnal nature. Wretched 24
man that I am, who shall put an end to this warfare, and deliver me from these deadly propensities which attach to my body? I thank my God for his 25
deliverance through Jesus Christ our Lord. And ought I then any longer, whilst I obey the law of God with my spiritual nature, to continue to obey with my carnal part the law of ungodliness[h]?

[h] The translation of this passage as given in our established version appears inconsistent with the tenor of the apostle's reasoning. Dr. Macknight suggests, that the particle ἄρα implies an interrogation, and accordingly gives that construction to the sentence which I have ventured to adopt. It is evident that St. Paul is asserting the effectual subjugation of the impure propensities of our nature in the case of the sincere and converted believer through the instrumentality of the divine grace. We cannot therefore suppose that he intends to imply the possibility of one and the same individual (αὐτὸς ἐγὼ) continuing "with his mind to serve the law of God, but with his flesh the law of sin." The whole tenor of the argument, as well as the form of the expression, would lead us to the contrary inference.

8 There is therefore no longer any condemnation to
those who are in Christ Jesus, and who walk, not
according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.
2 For the spiritual law of life in Christ Jesus has set
3 me free from that of sin and death. For that which
the carnal weakness of the ritual law could not do,
God has done for us by sending his own Son in the
likeness of our sinful flesh, and as an expiation for
sin, and thus has destroyed the power of sin in the
4 flesh: that the righteousness required by the law
might be attained by us who walk not according to
5 the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For they
who live according to the flesh continue to follow
the sinful propensities of the flesh; but they who
live according to the Spirit seek the good things of
6 the Spirit. For the pursuit of the things of the
flesh is death; but the pursuit of the things of the
7 Spirit is life and peace; because the cherishing of
the propensities of the flesh is enmity to God, for
they neither are, nor ever can be, subjected to the
8 perfect law of God. Those therefore, who continue
to be wrapt up in the mere pursuits of the flesh,
9 cannot please God. But you are no longer in the
flesh, but in the Spirit: inasmuch as I trust that
the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if any one
has not the Spirit of Christ, he assuredly is none of
10 his. But if Christ dwells in you, then your body
is dead with respect to sin, but your Spirit is alive
11 with respect to holiness. And if the Spirit of that
God who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you,

then He who raised Christ from the dead shall also bring again to life your mortal bodies through his Spirit which dwells within you.

Therefore, brethren, we are henceforward under a 12
solemn obligation to control the propensities of the flesh: for if you live according to the desires of the 13
flesh you shall die; but if, through the Spirit, you put to death the works of the flesh, you shall live.

All then, who are thus led and influenced by the 14
Spirit of God, become the sons of God. Nor is 15
this a state of timid subservience to a rigorous master, but one of real and actual adoption, by which we are authorized to look up to him as children to their parent; hence that cheerful com- 16
munity of feeling and spiritual intercourse with the Divinity within us, which so convincingly tells us that we are the children of God: and if children, 17
then heirs: heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; suffering at present the afflictions to which he himself submitted whilst upon the earth, in the hope that we may also hereafter be glorified together with him in heaven.

For be assured that the afflictions of the present 18
life are as nothing when compared with the glory which shall be finally revealed to us. For the ear- 19
nest expectation of the whole of the human race even now waits impatiently for the manifestation of the redemption of the sons of God; for our nature 20
was made subject to its present infirmities and corruption, not as though that were its original de-

stination or the final object of God's providence, without any ulterior design; but through the wise prospective arrangement of him who so disposed it,
21 in order that it might finally be set free from the bondage of mortality to the glorious liberty which shall hereafter be the heritage of the sons of God.
22 For we know that the whole creation has up to this moment been groaning as in the pains of child-birth for the developement of a happier and better
23 state of things than the present: and not only has such been the earnest expectation of both Gentiles and Jews in former times, but even we ourselves, admitted as we are to the participation of a better covenant, being the first fruits of the Holy Spirit, even we, so long as we continue subject to the laws of mortality, are still involved in this same agony of expectation, waiting for that adoption which has not yet been completed, namely, the deliverance of our bodily nature from its present state of corruption.
24 For our redemption is at present in *hope* only, and not in actual fruition. But hope which has already attained its object has ceased to be hope, since no man hopes for what he actually possesses.
25 But if hope, to be such, is necessarily the desire of things *not yet in our possession*, then is it our duty
26 *to wait patiently for its consummation*. And accordingly as we endure affliction in our present state of trial, so also the Divine Spirit itself, which is in us, bears its part with, and sustains, us under

our sorrows: for we in this life are too ignorant even to pray for that which is the best for us; but the Holy Spirit silently prays for us without our knowledge; and He who sees the interior of our 27
hearts listens to these secret supplications of the Spirit which it offers to God in the behalf of his saints[i].

One thing then we are perfectly assured of; that, 28
be the present aspect of God's providence what it may, all things are at this moment working together for the production of ultimate good to those who are called to participate in that redemption which God predetermined for those who love and believe in him, from the foundation of the world.
[k] For those whose obedience he foreknew, those 29

[i] This passage affords a beautiful and encouraging picture of the cooperating aid of the divine grace afforded to every sincere Christian in this our present state of infirmity and ignorance. It is worthy of observation also on another account, as explicitly asserting the distinct personality of the Holy Spirit in the mysterious union of the eternal Godhead.

[k] St. Paul here expressly asserts, that the predestination of individuals to salvation is the consequence of God's foreknowledge of their respective dispositions, an arrangement perfectly accordant with our indelible notions of divine justice. If it be alleged that this view of that mysterious question does not remove all the difficulties connected with it, we can only answer, that it is perfectly satisfactory so far *as our own eternal destination is concerned*, and that the perplexities which still remain unsolved are such only as meet us in every discussion con-

same he predestined to bear the image of his Son, that Christ might be to them as the elder brother

nected with the divine nature, but which have no reference whatever to our personal interests, or to our duty as moral agents. We cannot read these cautious statements contained in the sacred writings with regard to this much discussed and interminable question, without feeling pain and surprise when we turn from them to the unhesitating, and it is difficult not to add *unscriptural*, assertions of human authority on this subject. The best answer which we can give to the following passage, which constitutes the ninth article of the confession of faith of the synod of Dort, is the placing it in juxta position with the inspired words of the apostle to which this note is appended.

Eadem hæc electio facta est *non* ex prævisâ fide, fideique obedientiâ, sanctitate, aut aliâ aliquâ bonâ qualitate et dispositione, tanquam causâ seu conditione in homine eligendo prærequisitâ, sed ad fidem, fideique obedientiam, sanctitatem, &c. Ac proinde electio est fons omnis salutaris boni: unde fides, sanctitas, et reliqua dona salvifica, ipsa denique vita æterna, ut fructus et effectus ejus, profluunt, secundum illud apostoli. "Elegit nos" (non quia eramus, sed) "ut essemus sancti et inculpati in conspectu ejus in charitate." Ephes. i. 4.

Should it be objected to the foregoing remarks, that the words "whose obedience," inserted by me in the translation, are not borne out by any corresponding term in the Greek text, I answer, that the assertion of the fact of God's foreknowledge in the original passage necessarily implies the existence of some subject-matter as the object of the particular exercise of the divine intellect here alluded to:—that such subject-matter cannot be supposed to

among many brethren: and those whom he thus predestined, those same he called; and those whom he thus called, those same he justified by the redemption which is in Christ; and those whom he has thus justified, those same he has made heirs of his glory. 30

What shall we say then to these things? If God is for us, who or what of all the evil persons or things with which we may be at present surrounded can finally prevail against us? He who spared not his own Son, but gave him up to death for our sake, will not He, who has already given to us so transcendent a gift, give us also whatever other things shall be necessary for us? 31 32

Who then shall charge those whom God has deigned to receive into his covenant of mercy with the inadequacy of their works? God himself has accepted and acquitted them through the merits of 33

have been the mere *persons* of the parties foreknown, since those of all human beings whatever, of the lost no less than of the justified, must from all eternity have been equally objects of the prescience of their Creator:—consequently that it could be nothing else than their possession of some of those moral qualities which exist in different degrees in different men. But Scripture informs us of none such as are really acceptable with God, excepting *Christian faith and obedience*, or, in other words, that faculty of the soul by which, with the cooperating aid of the Holy Spirit, we are enabled to perform our appointed task in the great duty of working out our salvation.

34 Christ's expiation. Who amongst his creatures
then shall dare to pronounce sentence of condemna-
tion upon them? It is Christ himself, who died, or
rather let us say, who is risen again, and is even
now on God's right hand, who is our advocate, and
35 pleads for us. Who then shall separate us from
the love of Christ? shall affliction, or privation, or
persecution, or hunger, or nakedness, or peril, or
36 the sword? (as it is written, Psalm xliv. 22. "For
thy sake are we killed all the day long, we are
37 accounted as sheep for the slaughter.") In all such
momentary afflictions we are more than conquerors
38 through the support of him who loved us. For
I am fully assured that neither death, nor life, nor
angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor the things
which now are, nor the things which are yet to
39 come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature
shall be able to separate us from the love of God,
which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Section VII.

The exclusive election of the Jewish nation as God's peculiar people, and the depositories of his revealed will, being necessarily terminated by the extension of the new covenant of mercy to the whole world whether Jew or Gentile, the Apostle now proceeds to shew that this arrangement, so mortifying to the national vanity of the former, is neither indicative of any fickleness in the divine decrees, nor can be reasonably charged with injustice, or the violation of a promise. This he proceeds to prove, in the first place, by shewing that the original covenant made with them was *conditional*, and necessarily implied undeviating obedience on their part: secondly, that God's election of that particular people was perfectly *gratuitous*, both Isaac and Jacob, the founders of that race, having been chosen by him in preference to

their elder brothers before they could by their own conduct have in any way merited such a distinctive mark of favour: thirdly, that that election had been virtually forfeited by the idolatry of the Israelites, and had therefore been continued to them and their posterity only by the free mercy and good will of the Almighty: and fourthly, that the admission of the Gentiles into one common covenant with them was in fact not only indirectly implied, but clearly and explicitly declared in various passages of the prophetic writings. He then goes on to shew, that in real fact no privilege whatever has been withdrawn from the Jews, every individual of that nation being admitted to the offer of the new covenant as freely as the Gentiles, and being excluded from the benefit of it only by his own persevering obstinacy and want of faith. That in consequence of this obstinacy God's favour is undoubtedly withdrawn from them for the present, and transferred to the Gentiles, but that the moment of their return to Him will be that of his return to them; and that accordingly the whole world both Jew and Gentile shall one day be included within the pale of the Gospel dispensation, and joint partakers of the divine favour and mercy.

Since then such is the nature of the dispensation 9
of the new covenant of grace, that it has broken
down the partition wall between Jews and Gentiles,
and, by placing both on an equal footing, finally
extinguished the claim of the Jewish nation to any
priority in God's favour over the rest of mankind;—
such being the case, (be assured that I speak the
sincere truth:—I lie not, as my conscience, as it is
open to the scrutiny of the Holy Spirit, bears me
witness,) as a jealous Jew bearing sincere love to 2
my countrymen, and proud of their national privi-
leges, I feel on their account great grief and agony
of heart. For I could even wish to be in my own 3
person an outcast from Christ, so it might benefit

my brethren, my beloved kindred according to the
4 flesh, the Jewish nation: men whose boast it has
been that they are of the blood of Israel; to whom
for so many ages belonged the peculiar adoption as
God's chosen people, the glory, the covenants with
our forefathers, the giving of the law, the ritual
5 worship, and the promises: whose are the fathers,
men favoured by God, and from whose lineage
according to the flesh has sprung Christ himself,
God ruling over all, blessed for ever and ever.
Amen.

6 Imagine not, however, that in superseding his
former covenant with you, God has violated or
forgotten his promise made to our forefathers. For
not all who claim descent from the blood of Israel
7 are in reality God's chosen[1] Israel; any more than

[1] The whole Israelitish nation was externally and by election God's peculiar and chosen people; but the Apostle here and in the following argument asserts that "God's own Israel," those who were actually chosen and elected by him, were those only who were distinguished by their piety and obedience. In like manner we find St. Paul addressing the Corinthians, in the introduction to his first Epistle, as persons "called to be God's saints;" yet we learn from that same Epistle that the Church of Corinth contained at that time many immoral and heretical members, whom we cannot by the most charitable construction conceive to have been at that moment in a state of grace. "Many are called," says our blessed Saviour in his parable of the guest who came to the feast without the wedding garment,

all the various descendants of Abraham can claim as such the benefit of the promises made to Abraham. "In *Isaac*, said the Almighty, (Gen. xxi. 12.) shall thy seed be called." That is to say, not all 8
the natural descendants of thy body, such as Ismael and his progeny, shall be considered as God's children, but *the especial children of the promise only* shall have the benefit of the peculiar covenant made with Abraham's seed. For these were the words of 9
the promise. "I will come to thee at this thy time of life, and *Sarah* shall have a son." (Gen. xviii. 10.) And again in the instance of Rebecca, 10
when she was pregnant by one person, our father Isaac, before the children were yet born, and whilst 11
they had done as yet neither good nor evil, (that God might shew that his selection of our race in the person of Jacob was of his own free will, and not the consequence of any claim of merit on the part of our forefather Jacob so selected,) even then 12
it was declared to her, (Gen. xxv. 23.) "The elder shall serve the younger." As it is written in 13
the book of Malachi, "I loved Jacob, and hated Esau."

What shall we say then? That God has broken 14
his covenant with us? By no means. On the 15

"but few are chosen." The inference from these passages is obvious, namely, that the universality of the call to a participation in the blessings of the Gospel covenant is nevertheless conditional, and may be subsequently forfeited by our disobedience.

contrary, our forefathers, we know, broke their covenant with him even at the very moment of its ratification, by falling into the grievous sin of idolatry; yet even then, under such grievous provocation, he withdrew not his protection from them, but graciously declared to Moses when interceding with him on their behalf, "I will have mercy on him for whom I choose to have mercy, and will pity him I choose to pity." (Exod. xxxiii. 19.)
16 So that it is not the plea of exertion or merit on our own or on their part that we can presume to set up as affording us a claim to his favour, but his own free and gratuitous selection of us from among
17 the surrounding nations. On the other hand, he says to Pharaoh, (Exod. ix. 16.) "For this cause have I raised you to your present greatness, that I might shew my power in you, and that my name might
18 be declared throughout all the earth." Therefore as we see from these two instances, he spares a nation whom he chooses to spare, and leaves, when he thinks fit, another nation to its own obduracy.
19 But you will still say perhaps, "Why then, having used his own free discretion with us thus far, to raise us above the level of other nations, does he now, without any fresh offence or resistance on our part, withdraw the privileges which he once con-
20 ferred upon us?" "And who, let me ask in my turn, art thou, who puttest this captious question to God? Recollect the words of the prophet Jeremiah, when he foretold this very abandonment

of the Jewish people, and asserted God's right to raise up or to put down nations as might please him best, (Jer. xviii. 6.) "Shall the thing shaped say unto its former, Why hast thou modelled me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, 21
of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" Are we entitled 22
to remonstrate, if it shall have pleased God, in order to manifest his just wrath, and the plenitude of his power, to bear with for a time, with long-suffering and forbearance, the vessels of wrath, fitted to destruction; or, in order to make known 23
the riches of his glory, to raise up to eminence the vessels of his mercy, prepared by him for glory? as 24
he has now done in our case, and in that of the Gentiles, calling to his covenant not only such of the Jews as will be obedient to him, but those of other nations also. This is no new and capricious alteration in the purposes of God's government. The prophet Hosea, we may remember, has ex- 25
pressly foretold to us, this future extension of God's favour to the Gentiles indiscriminately with the Jews. "I will call that my people, says he, (Hosea 26
ii. 23.) which was not my people, and her beloved who was not beloved." And again, (chap. i. 10.) "It shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, 'Ye are not my people,' there shall they be called the children of the living God." Isaiah also proclaims the rejection of a 27
large portion of the lineal descendants of Israel

in the following passage, (Isaiah x. 22.) "Although the number of the children of Israel be as the sand
28 of the sea, a remnant only shall be preserved. For the Lord will bring his dispensations to a conclusion, and cut them short in righteousness; because he shall make short work in his government of the
29 earth." As the same prophet also had said to the same purpose in a former passage, (Isaiah i. 9.) "Had not the Lord of hosts left us a remaining seed, we should have been as Sodom, and like unto Gomorrah."

30 What shall we say then? That the Gentiles who never sought after righteousness have attained to real righteousness; namely, the righteousness of
31 faith: and that Israel, who had God's own law of ritual righteousness for their guide, have not attained to the end of even ritual righteousness.
32 And why so? Because they trusted to mere ceremonial observances as constituting the whole of righteousness, and sought it not also in the holiness of faith. And thus they stumbled against that stumbling block, the spirituality of the Christian
33 covenant; as it is written by the prophet Isaiah, (Isaiah viii. 14.) "Behold I place in Sion a stumbling stone and rock of offence: yet whosoever believeth on it shall not be ashamed."

10 Brethren, the earnest desire of my heart, and my constant prayer to God, is for the salvation of
2 Israel my countrymen: for I can testify for them that they are not deficient in zeal for God; but

unhappily their zeal is without sufficient knowledge.
For not being aware of the nature of that righte- 3
ousness which is really pleasing to God, and wishing to establish their claim to righteousness by the merit of their own ritual performances, they have not submitted themselves as they should have done to that righteousness which is of God. For Christ 4
is the completion of the law, a means of perfect justification to all those who believe in him.

For the righteousness required by Moses in the 5
law which he received and taught was that which was to be the result of complete and adequate obedience, so that the man who accepted that rule as a rule of life was bound entirely to conform to it in all its parts. "Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, said he; which if a man do, he shall live in them." (Leviticus xviii. 5.) But the righteousness which is of faith addresses 6
mankind in the same beautiful and simple language with which Moses exhorted the Israelites after that he had laid before them the promises and threatenings of the Almighty upon the final promulgation of his law. "Say not in thine heart, said he, (Deuteronomy xxx. 12.) who shall ascend into heaven;" and so also in this our present life say we, for it is not yet permitted us to examine the heavenly nature and mysteries of Christ: and again, 7
"Say not," said he, "who shall descend for us into the deep;" and so also again say we; for it is not at present for us to pronounce upon the hidden

secrets of that lower world which Christ visited for
8 our sakes;—but as he then added, so also in like
manner say we, "The word is nigh thee, and in
thy mouth, and in thy heart." For such is the
9 word of faith which we preach, namely, that if you
will confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and
believe in your heart that God raised him from the
10 dead, you shall be saved. For with the heart man
believes unto justification, and with his mouth pro-
11 fesses that belief unto salvation. For the Scripture
says, (Isaiah xxviii. 16.) "Whosoever believeth on
12 him shall not be ashamed." Nor is there any dif-
ference in this respect between the Jew and the
Gentile: for the same Lord is over all, sufficiently
rich in redemption for all who call upon him.
13 For so says the prophet Joel, (Joel ii. 32.) "For
whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord
shall be saved."

14 But how shall men call upon him, unless they
have previously faith in him? and how shall they
acquire faith in him unless they have previously
15 heard his Gospel preached? and how shall they
hear his Gospel preached without an apostle to
preach it to them? and how shall a man become
an apostle, unless he has his commission from God?
According to the words of the prophet Isaiah,
(Isaiah lii. 7.) "How beautiful are the feet of him
that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace,
16 that bringeth glad tidings of good things." Yet
too often has the Preacher lifted up his voice in

vain: men stop their ears, and refuse to hear the tidings of the Gospel; according to the prophecy of Isaiah, (Isaiah liii. 1.) "Who, Lord, hath believed our report?"

If you ask then, "How are you to acquire that 17
faith which is necessary to salvation?" I answer, "by listening with submission to the instruction of your teacher." If you ask again, "Who is that teacher?" I again reply, "He who bears God's own commission to preach his revelation." And has 18
not that word been preached? Most assuredly it has, and with such notoriety, that we may apply to it the language of the Psalmist, "Their sound is gone forth into all lands, and their words unto the ends of the world." But, whilst other nations have 19
listened and been converted, has Israel condescended to hearken to the words of revelation? The prophetic language of Moses (Deuteronomy xxxii. 21.) will best answer this question. "I will rouse your jealousy by preferring to you people whom you have not deigned to consider as a nation, and rouse your anger by setting up those whom you despised as ignorant." And Isaiah boldly expresses himself on 20
the same subject, (Isaiah lxv. 1.) "I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me." And again 21
in the next verse, "All day long have I stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and obstinate people."

Do I assert then that God has finally abandoned 11

his people Israel? Far from it. I myself, who now address you as his apostle, am by descent an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, and of the tribe
2 of Benjamin. God assuredly has not abandoned his people: that part of them I mean whose obedience he foreknew. Recollect the words which the Scriptures put into the mouth of Elijah, how he remonstrates with God against the rebellious
3 Israelites of his time, (1 Kings xix. 18.) "Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek
4 my life." And what is God's answer? "I have reserved to myself seven thousand men who have
5 not bowed the knee to Baal." And so may we say at the present day, "There is still reserved in
6 Israel a remnant selected to receive mercy." But remember that if they are to be saved through *mercy*, then is their salvation not through *meritorious works*, since mercy would cease to be such might it be claimed not as a gratuitous kindness, but as a debt which it were injustice to refuse.
7 What then is our conclusion? That Israel as a nation has not obtained the salvation of the Gospel, but that the select remnant of the obedient among them have obtained it, whilst the others have hard-
8 ened their hearts against its reception. As it is written by Isaiah, (Isaiah xxix. 10.) where he describes the judicial hardening of the hearts of the inhabitants of Jerusalem in his day, in punishment of their wilful disobedience. "God," says he, "has

given them a spirit of slumber, eyes incapable of sight, and ears incapable of hearing to this day."
As David also says, (Psalm lxix. 22.) "Let their 9
table also be made a snare and a trap, and a stumbling block, and a retaliation to them: let their eyes 10
be darkened that they may not see; and bow thou down their back."

Has then this obstinacy of the Jews, whilst it 11
has forfeited for them their privilege of being God's peculiar people, operated to their final and absolute exclusion from his mercy? I trust not. Rather let us hope that the salvation which, upon their neglect of it, has passed from them to the Gentiles, may one day react beneficially upon them by exciting an emulation amongst themselves similar to that which has already appeared amongst the Gentile converts. And if so; if their present fall has 12
been the cause of the extension of the Gospel covenant to the rest of mankind; if their present forfeiture has proved a source of riches to the Gentiles; much greater, we trust, will eventually be the benefit resulting hereafter to mankind at large from their final restoration to God's favour.

And it is under this conviction that I make my 13
appeal to the Gentiles, as an apostle to them of that revelation which my own countrymen the Jews have rejected; proclaiming the more publicly my present mission to *them*, in the hope that by so 14
doing I may rouse the Jewish nation, who are my own flesh and blood, to a competition with them,

and thus be the means of saving some of them.
15 For if the abrogation of the Jewish covenant, and their rejection as God's people, has produced the happy result of reconciling the heathen world to God, surely their readmission to his favour may be expected to lead to still more happy consequences.
16 For if the original materials are holy, the consequent mass derived from them will be holy in like proportion; and if the root is holy, so may the
17 branches be expected to be. And if some of the natural branches have been broken off, and you the Gentiles, like branches of the wild olive, have been engrafted upon the original stock in their place, and together with the remaining boughs now derive fatness and nourishment from the cultivated root,
18 are you therefore to boast yourselves of your newly acquired privilege, as though you support the root,
19 and are not yourselves sustained by it? Do you assert that the original and natural branches were broken off, in order that you, the wild scions,
20 might be grafted in their room? Be it so. Recollect however that they were broken off *because of their unbelief*, and that you occupy their place solely on account of that faith which they want. Be not elated then with your present situation, but possess
21 it with fear and trembling; remembering that if God did not spare even the original branches, so, if you sin as they have done, he may in like man-
22 ner not spare you. Contemplate therefore in this awful example at once the goodness, and the just

severity of God: his just severity in the punishment of those who have fallen; his goodness as manifested in your case, if you continue to deserve it; for be assured that when you cease to deserve it, it will be withdrawn: as they, if they will only 23
turn away from their present unbelief, will be again engrafted upon the same stock from which they have been severed. For God is able so to deal with them. For if you, who were originally 24
branches of the wild and worthless olive, were notwithstanding artificially engrafted upon the good and cultivated stock, how much rather shall the naturally good and cultivated branches be engrafted once more upon that stock by which they were first reared.

Brethren, I am the more earnest in impressing 25
upon you this warning, that you may not be puffed up with vain and false notions of your own comparative merit. Be assured that a temporary hardness of heart only has come upon part of the Jewish nation, which shall be allowed to continue no longer than till the conversion of the Gentiles shall be complete; and thus eventually all Israel 26
itself shall be saved: as it is written, (Isaiah lix. 20.) "The Redeemer shall come out of Sion, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this 27
is my covenant with them when I shall take away their sins: my spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of

thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever."

28 With regard then to their rejection of the Gospel covenant, the Jews have for the present become as it were enemies of God, for the sake of the salvation of you Gentiles: but as being of the race of God's chosen people, they are still even now beloved by him for the sake of their forefathers.
29 For he is not a Being who acts capriciously, or elects for reasons which he afterwards disclaims.
30 As therefore you formerly were disobedient to the true God, but have now been admitted to mercy in consequence of their unbelief, which has caused
31 the favour of God to pass from them to you; so have they now also in their turn become disobedient, that the mercy which you have now received may one day extend from you to include them-
32 selves also. For God has allowed both you and them to fall into disobedience, that he might shew his mercy upon you all on equal terms, and in like proportion.

33 Oh! may we well therefore exclaim, the immensity of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how inexplicable are his judgments, and how
34 untraceable are his ways! For who has comprehended the mind of the Lord, or who hath been
35 his counsellor? or who hath conferred benefits upon
36 him, to have claims upon him as his creditor? since from him, and through him, and for him are all things.—To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

SECTION VIII.

Having in the former part of this Epistle proved from the failure of all former dispensations the necessity of a new covenant better suited to the peculiar circumstances of our nature, and having shewn the perfect impartiality of God's government in his revelation of the promises of the Gospel to all mankind indiscriminately, the apostle now proceeds to inculcate the grand practical result of this doctrine, in the obligation which it imposes upon us to a life of holiness and unblemished morality, in the conscientious discharge of our various duties to God and man, and in the exercise of the most universal brotherly love towards the whole human race.

[m] I intreat you therefore, brethren, in the name 12
of those mercies of God which we have all experienced, to render yourselves pure according to the pure nature of the sublime covenant to which you are admitted, and present your bodies a living, holy, and acceptable sacrifice to God, which is your fit, becoming, and reasonable service. And be not 2
adapted to the vain views and speculations of this world, but put on a new character in the renovation of your minds, that you may feelingly experience how good, and pleasing, and perfect the will of God is. And accordingly, as bearing his commission to 3

[m] It is scarcely possible to imagine any exhortation to holiness and a good life more impressive and beautiful than the one here given. It is only equalled by our Saviour's own sermon on the mount, and bears impressed upon it the same character of a divine morality far more perfect than any which can be conceived to have proceeded from any school of mere human philosophy.

address you, I require of you all, that none among you shall think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to deem of himself meekly, according to the measure of the talents and gifts
4 which God has entrusted to him. For, as we have in our own persons many members which constitute
5 our one single body, so we, the multitude of Christian believers, are one body in Christ, but separately are each of us different limbs, all bearing our
6 peculiar and distinct offices. Having then all of us our own individual gifts and abilities, according to the measure in which the mercy of God has distributed them to us, let us use them to the best of our power for the promotion of that object for which they were given. Is our gift that of the clear apprehension of the doctrines of revelation? [n] Let us

[n] The word "prophecy" (προφητεία) is frequently used by St. Paul, as in the original of this passage, in the sense of exposition, or spiritual interpretation of Scripture. The advice here given, that those who undertake to expound any passage of the sacred writings should be careful to keep in their mind the general analogy and harmony of the Christian dispensation as *a whole*, (κατὰ τὴν ἀναλογίαν τῆς πιστέως,) has unfortunately been too much lost sight of by theologians and commentators of all ages and denominations. Of all the various shades of opinion which distract the Christian world, how large a portion is referable to the single abuse of dwelling with minute and almost exclusive attention to single passages torn from their proper position where bearing upon some peculiar chain of

expound them to others according to their full meaning and spirit. Is our lot cast among the 7
humbler services of the Church? let us execute that duty, such as it may be, to the best of our power. Are we called to instruct others? let us 8
make our instruction advantageous to those committed to our care. To preach? let us preach with earnestness and sincerity. Let him that gives, give with simplicity and openness of disposition: let him that is entrusted with authority exercise it conscientiously, and for the good of those over whom he presides: let him that shews mercy, do so cheerfully and from the bottom of his heart. Let your mutual kindness to one another be in full 9
sincerity, without deceit or dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cling to and cherish that which is good. Love one another as brethren, each pre- 10
ferring his neighbour to himself: not remiss in the 11
performance of your several duties; eager in your zeal, and serving the Lord in full humility: consol- 12

argument, and thus made to sanction some favourite preconceived theory at variance with the general character, and destructive of some of the most certain and palpable doctrines, of the inspired writings! A wide and discursive range is to the full as necessary for the due apprehension of Scripture as a close and accurate examination of parts; but it is a faculty much less frequently met with, and which requires a rare combination of impartiality, discrimination, and judgment.

ing yourselves in the hope of the fulfilment of God's promises: bearing your afflictions patiently: perse-
13 vering in the fervency of prayer: imparting to the wants and necessities of your Christian brethren:
14 practising hospitality. Bless them who persecute
15 you: bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them who
16 rejoice, and weep with them who weep. Be equal in your bearings to all men; not seeking after eminence and distinction, but making yourselves companions to the meek and humble minded. Be not
17 wise in your own conceits. Return not injury for injury, but carefully live so that men may have
18 cause to approve your conduct. If it be possible, at all events so far as in you lies, be at peace with
19 all men: not avenging your own quarrels, but let the violence of your enemies pass away without attempting retaliation; remembering what is written, (Deut. xxxii. 35.) "Vengeance is mine, I will re-
20 pay, saith the Lord." As also in the book of Proverbs, (Prov. xxv. 21, 22.) "[o] Therefore if thine

[o] The practical inference to be derived from this passage quoted from the book of Proverbs, as from the preceding one taken from the book of Deuteronomy, is evidently this; namely, that we avenge not our own wrongs, but leave our cause in the hands of God, who, we may be assured, will finally execute justice in wisdom and holiness upon the whole human race. Such conduct is clearly perfectly compatible with the most complete Christian forbearance, as it seeks nothing more than that arbitration between ourselves and our adversaries which will undoubt-

enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head." Be not overcome by evil to do in like 21
manner, but rather let the goodness of your conduct subdue evil in others, till they follow your better example. Let every person whatsoever sub- 13
mit with due obedience to the authorities of the state; for there is no authority but of God: and all existing authorities are as God's ministers. Who- 2
soever therefore resists the power of the magistrate, resists the ordinance of God: and they who resist shall draw upon themselves the just penalty of their disobedience. For magistrates are not a terror to 3
good works, but to evil: would you then stand in no fear of those in authority: do your duty as a good citizen, and you shall receive commendation from them. For a ruler is God's deputy, for the 4

edly be administered in perfect righteousness and mercy. From the whole tenor of the apostle's reasoning it is impossible for us to suppose that he recommends the display of acts of kindness to our bitterest enemies *for the purpose of aggravating* the final judgment against them; yet such has been the invidious interpretation given to this passage by the cavillers at revelation. May not the expression of "heaping coals of fire on the head of an individual" after all be nothing more than a strong oriental metaphor, intended to describe *the burning glow of shame and compunction* which the repayment of injuries with kindness must necessarily excite in every person not quite callous to generous and honourable feeling?

improvement and regulation of public morals: if therefore you do evil, expect the chastisement of the law; for he bears not the sword of authority in vain: for he is, I repeat, God's deputy to execute
5 vengeance upon the evil doer. Wherefore it is necessary for you to submit, not merely from a fear of punishment, but from the higher principle of
6 duty and conscience. For the same reason also pay your taxes and contributions as required by your rulers, for they are God's ministers, holding their authority from him on this occasion also.
7 Render therefore to all men their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs,
8 fear to whom fear, respect to whom respect. Owe no man any thing but the debt of mutual and brotherly love, for all the prohibitions of the moral law are after all nothing more than injunctions to
9 enforce this single duty. It is for this reason therefore, because we are bound to do good and not evil to our neighbours, that we are forbidden to commit adultery, to kill, to steal, to bear false-witness, to covet the possessions of another. In fact, the whole of our social duties of whatsoever description may be shortly summed up as enforced by the plain rule,
10 "*to love our neighbour as ourself*," for love necessarily abstains from working any injury to our neighbour, and consequently observes all the above-mentioned, and such like, precepts by which all injury to another is expressly forbidden.
11 These things do, my brethren, and earnestly; for

the time is come when it behoves us to rouse ourselves effectually from our sleep: the hour of our salvation approaches, and is already much nearer, than when our consciences were first awakened by the word of revelation: the night is far spent, and 12
the day is at hand: let us therefore put away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of the light: and, recollecting that it *is* the day, let us 13
henceforward walk decently as in the day; not in riotings and drunkenness, not in fornication and lasciviousness, not in quarrels and envying, but put 14
ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and study not to pamper the corrupt appetites of the flesh.

With regard to such brethren as may be per- 14
plexed by conscientious scruples on the subject of trifling and unimportant observances, my advice is, receive them kindly, without distressing them by nice disputations on matters of indifference. One 2
man, for instance, believes all kinds of food to be lawful: another more scrupulous confines himself to a vegetable diet. Let not the former ridicule 3
the conscientious abstinence of the latter, nor the latter censure as impious the satisfied conviction of the former. For God accepts the upright intentions of them both. Who art thou, let me ask, 4
who presumest to pronounce an opinion upon the servant of another? let him render his account to his own master, by whose judgment he shall stand or fall; and stand he will, for God has power to acquit him.

5 Again, one man makes distinctions between days,
as though one day were more holy than another,
whilst some consider all days alike. My advice is,
let every man act according to the deliberate con-
6 viction of his own conscience, and in so doing,
he who sanctifies certain days, sanctifies them to
God; and he who makes no distinction of days,
provided he do so upon principle, pleases God
equally. He who is unscrupulous about meats,
eats them to the Lord, and is thankful for the
indulgence; whilst he who abstains from them
through scruples of conscience, sanctifies his absti-
7 nence to the Lord, and gives thanks also. For
none of us either live or die for ourselves, and for
8 our own pleasure, but if we live, we live to give
glory to God, and if we die, we die to give glory to
God, so that, whether we live or we die, we are
9 God's property. For Christ died, and rose again,
and was received back into life, that he might
make both the dead and the living his own peculiar
10 possession. By what right then do you, does any
man, judge a brother? by what authority despise a
brother? for all of us, high and low, shall stand alike
11 before the judgment seat of Christ: as it is written
by the prophet Isaiah, (Isaiah xlv. 23.) "As I live,
saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and
12 every tongue shall confess to God." Are we then
13 all of us to give account of ourselves to God? if so,
let us not judge one another: but let our judgment
be this, that we place not stumbling blocks in the

way of our brother's conscience. It is true that I 14
individually am convinced, from what I conceive of
the spiritual character of the Christian dispensation,
that there is no meat which is any longer forbidden
to Christians or unclean in itself: but what of that?
to him who considers it forbidden it *is* forbidden.
If then you wantonly shock your brother's scruples 15
for so trifling a consideration as this or that kind of
food, you are in so doing guilty of a serious breach
of brotherly love. Tempt not then thus unneces-
sarily the conscience of one for whom Christ himself
submitted to die. Let not then the integrity of 16
your own conviction on these points be a means of
annoyance to others[p]. For the kingdom of God is 17

[p] The question respecting the lawfulness of meats, which may appear trifling to us in the present day, who have been brought up in the full possession of Christian liberty, must naturally have been one of considerable moment to persons recently converted from Judaism, and whose earliest religious impressions must have suggested to them a degree of scrupulosity on this subject which it would require no common strength of mind effectually to subdue in after life. The force of this prejudice at that period is evident from the sanction which the first council of Jerusalem thought it expedient to afford to these scruples, as recorded in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. To ourselves the discussion has indeed lost its interest, but the beautiful and truly Christian spirit of the Apostle's exhortation on this subject is applicable to all ages, and might afford a most salutary lesson to every denomination

not this or that meat, this or that drink; but it is holiness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.
18 In these things whosoever serves Christ is acceptable to God, and should be approved by men:
19 why not then follow the works of peace, and such
20 things as may serve for the edification of one another? Let not the purity of that divine holiness which ought to exist among you be sacrificed for mere questions about meats; all things it is true are clean, and permitted to those who have no scruples on the subject; but they are no less sinful to him who sacrifices his conscience for the sake of
21 conformity with others. Wherefore neither eat any particular meat, nor drink wine or any other liquor, where by so doing you may lead a brother to sin against his own conviction, or may wound his
22 feelings. Is your own conscience at ease on these points? Be it so: act according to it, as you shall give account of yourself to God; and happy that
23 man whose breast thus acquits him. But he, on

of believers in those little feuds and jealousies which are so apt to accompany slight and unimportant differences of religious opinion even amongst the sincerely well disposed. It is melancholy to reflect how many unworthy triumphs of fancied superiority, how much real pain and mortification to the sensitive and timid mind, how much domestic and social bitterness have been inflicted upon mankind during the last eighteen centuries, which might have been effectually spared had the *spirit* of this exhortation been duly and seriously attended to.

the other hand, who makes scrupulous distinctions, and yet notwithstanding acts against them, is guilty of sin, because every wilful resistance to conscience is sin.

Let us then, who feel convinced of our Christian 15
liberty, be notwithstanding kind to the infirmities of others, sacrificing for the sake of edification and the 2
good of our neighbour, even those occasional indulgences of the innocence of which we may be sincerely confident. For Christ himself did not seek his 3
own gratification, as it is written in the sixty-ninth Psalm, "The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me." For all these things which have been 4
written of old in the Scriptures were written for our instruction, that we by patience and the comfort which they convey might have hope. May then 5
the God of patience and comfort give you mutual good will and forbearance one to another, according to the example of Jesus Christ: that you may with 6
one mind and one mouth glorify your God, and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore re- 7
ceive one another kindly, as Christ has received us, to the glory of God.

CONCLUDING ADDRESS.

And now, to return to the main argument and 8
object of this letter, the substance of what I would urge is this: "that Jesus Christ came to us in the first place as the minister to those of the Jewish

covenant, to prove to them the veracity and faith of God, and to carry into effect the divine promises
9 made to our forefathers: and, secondly, he came, in order that the Gentiles also might praise and glorify God, being justified through the same covenant of mercy. As it is written in the eighteenth Psalm, "For this cause I will confess thee among the
10 Gentiles, and sing unto thy name." As Moses also testified to the like effect, (Deut. xxxii. 43.) "Re-
11 joice ye Gentiles with his people." And again as we read in the hundred and seventeenth Psalm, "Praise the Lord all ye Gentiles, and laud him all
12 ye people." And again also as Isaiah has written, (Isaiah xi. 10.) "There shall be a root of Jesse, and he shall rise to reign over the Gentiles: in him shall the Gentiles rest their hope."

13 And now therefore may the God of that hope fill you with all joy and peace of mind in your belief, that you may overflow with hope, in the power of
14 the Holy Spirit. For my own part, brethren, I am convinced from what I have known of you, that you are filled with goodness, and abundance of knowledge for your mutual instruction and edification.
15 Still I have thought it my duty without reserve to put into writing a few suggestions for the purpose of refreshing your recollection on these points, as by my commission as an apostle I am entitled to
16 do: being deputed to be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, a priest of the new covenant of the Gospel, in order that I may present them to

him as an acceptable offering, purified by the Holy Spirit. Holding this commission, I can look back 17
upon the spiritual labours which I have myself already achieved, with a holy satisfaction as a faithful servant of God through Jesus Christ, (for I do not presume to 18
claim any part in that rapid diffusion of the Gospel among the Gentiles in profession and practice which Christ has elsewhere accomplished without any exertion of mine,) having had my administration as- 19
sisted by signs and miracles, operated by the power of the Holy Spirit; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have successfully preached the Gospel of Christ. Nay, I made it my ambition 20
to proclaim the Gospel in regions where Christ was yet unknown, that I might not be erecting my own labour upon another man's foundation. As it is 21
written in Isaiah, (Isaiah lii. 15.) "They shall see him, who have never been told of him, and they who have never heard of him shall understand him."

It was in consequence of these necessary occupa- 22
tions that I have been so long, and so frequently, prevented from coming to you as I had proposed: but now, having no longer any field open for exer- 23
tion in these parts, and having been anxious for many years past to come to you, whenever I can 24
take my journey into Spain, I will contrive to see you: for I hope that I shall be able to pay you a visit on my way, and to have your company during part of my journey onwards from Rome, after I shall have indulged myself a short time in

25 your society at that place. At present I am called
away to Jerusalem to arrange some matters for the
26 believers there: for the Christians of Macedon and
Achaia have thought proper to make a collection of
money for the relief of the poor members of the
27 Church at Jerusalem; and in so doing, have only
discharged a just debt; since, having derived from
the Church at Jerusalem so many spiritual blessings,
it is their duty to repay the obligation to the best of
their power, by the relief of their temporal wants.
28 So soon therefore as I shall have performed this,
and completed the necessary arrangements, I purpose
29 to pass through Rome into Spain; fully confident
that I shall find you in the full possession of the
30 blessing of the Gospel of Christ. Meanwhile I be-
seech you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus
Christ, and the love of the Spirit, to pray earnestly
31 to God for me in your religious assemblies, that
I may be preserved from the violence of the un-
believers in Judea, and that my ministry may be
32 acceptable to the Church at Jerusalem: that, hav-
ing accomplished that object, I may, with God's
blessing, come to you, and repose myself a short
33 time among you. The God of peace be with you all.
Amen.

16 I recommend our sister Phœbe, who is a servant
2 of the Church at Cenchrea, to your kindness: that
you may receive her in the Lord as becomes the
disciples of Christ, and assist her on any occasion
in which she may have need of your good offices;

for she has shewn kindness to many of our friends, as well as to myself. Salute in my name Priscilla, 3
and her husband Aquila [q], who have been my fellow labourers at Corinth; and who, as I and all the 4
Gentile Churches remember with gratitude, saved my life in that city at the risk of their own. Salute 5
the society of believers also, who reside with them. Salute my dear friend Epænetus, my first convert to Christ when I preached in Achaia. Salute Mary, 6
who has laboured much in my behalf. Salute my 7
relations and fellow prisoners Andronicus and Junia, who are much esteemed among the apostles, and whose conversion to Christianity preceded my own. 8
Salute Amplias, my friend in the Lord. Salute our 9
fellow labourer in Christ Urbanus, and my friend Stachys. Salute Apelles, that tried servant of 10
Christ. Salute the household of Aristobulus.

[q] The intercourse which subsisted at Corinth between Paul and his friends Aquila and Priscilla is mentioned in the eighteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. It is there stated that Aquila was a native of Pontus, and had been recently expelled from Rome together with the other Jews in consequence of the offence taken against that people by the emperor Claudius, an allusion to which we find recorded in Suetonius's life of that prince. The names of Aquila and Priscilla however clearly mark their Italian origin, and accordingly we cannot be surprised to find them returned to Rome at the date of this Epistle, which is generally supposed to have been not earlier than A. D. 57, about the third year of the reign of Nero.

11 Salute my relation Herodion: salute such of the household of Narcissus as are converted to our
12 faith. Salute Tryphæna and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord. Salute my friend Persis, who has also
13 laboured much in the Lord. Salute Rufus, a chosen servant of the Lord, and his mother, whom I also
14 look upon as my own. Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren who
15 are with them. Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the Christian
16 brethren with them. Salute one another with an holy kiss. The Churches of Christ salute you.

17 I intreat you, brethren, be on your guard against, and avoid, all those who cause schisms amongst
18 you, and lay stumbling-blocks in your way: for they are not, as they pretend, serving the cause of our Lord Jesus Christ, but of their own selfish appetites; and by their fair and plausible speeches
19 mislead the minds of the unsuspecting. For your obedience to the Gospel is every where spoken of; and I sincerely rejoice that it is so; but I am at the same time anxious that your faith may be pure, and
20 without the taint of heresy or false doctrine. And be assured that the God of peace will enable you shortly to trample Satan under your feet. Amen.

21 Timotheus my fellow labourer, and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, my relations, salute you.

22 I Tertius, who wrote out this letter at the apostle's dictation, salute you in the Lord.

23 Caius, whose hospitality I, with the whole Church,

have experienced, salutes you. Erastus the steward of the city, and our brother Quartus, salute you. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. 24
Amen.

Now to Him who is able to strengthen and con- 25
firm you in that Gospel which I have preached in the name of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of that mystery which God has kept secret from the past ages, but has now proclaimed, that, 26
through the means of the prophetic writings, and according to his divine purpose, it might be made known to all the nations of the globe, and thus bring them to the obedience of faith—to Him the 27
only wise God be glory for ever and ever, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE Epistle to the Romans has been generally considered as the most profoundly argumentative of all the writings of St. Paul. Its subject not being one of merely local and momentary importance, but having reference to the moral dealings of Providence with the whole human race, it naturally involves the discussion of topics which, so long as the present world exists, must afford to our minds the almost irresistible excitement of intense interest, at the same time that they are confessedly too mysterious for human solution. Accordingly it is from this storehouse of theological metaphysics that the impatient curiosity of mankind, ever too prone to convert into a mere play for the intellect what is intended for the holier purpose of spiritual edification, has selected more matter for irreconcileable controversy, than from any other portion

of the sacred writings. It is evident however that nothing could be more remote from the intentions of the inspired writer, than to afford materials for the display of this captious spirit. Although engaged by the transcendental nature of his subject in a chain of argument which could not avoid touching occasionally upon these much debated, and to us incomprehensible, points, we cannot but remark, that they are never obtruded by him unnecessarily upon the attention, nor allowed for a moment to interfere with, or derogate from, that tone of fervent and exalted piety, and those lessons of the purest practical morality, which it was his great aim to inculcate. "To vindicate the ways of God to man," is the primary proposition which forms the groundwork of his argument; and the superstructure which he has erected upon that immoveable foundation is the gratifying doctrine of the duty of the most unhesitating reliance on the infinite mercy and justice of a gracious Creator, and a demonstration of the great Gospel truth, that without practical holiness no man shall see God. When we recollect how much perverse ingenuity has been applied, for the purpose of rendering this beautiful summary of Christian ethics subservient to the morbid excitement of a controversy as unprofitable as it is interminable and mysterious, it will not perhaps be without its use, in our concluding remarks upon this Epistle, to recapitulate some of the more prominent propositions contained in it, which, as constituting the main links of his argument, we cannot doubt it to have been the Apostle's intention expressly to inculcate. The following conclusions are therefore here adduced, as being at all events too broadly and explicitly stated by St. Paul, in the course of his argument, to allow us to hesitate in receiving them as bearing the sanction of his high authority. With regard to any other more abstruse infer-

ences which the theological speculatist may be inclined to imagine that he can also discover in the positions laid down by the apostle, we would only wish to observe, that, since Scripture cannot be really at variance with itself, they must, if true, be at least such as are consistent with those doctrines of holy writ, which are too clear and palpable to be made matter for controversy.

1. That all men are sinners in the sight of God, and can only attain to salvation by the aid of a dispensation of imputed righteousness, and not of personal merit.

2. That the criminality of mankind is the consequence of their disobedience to an acknowledged law of righteousness, either natural or revealed.

3. That the spiritual condemnation of the heathen world is the result of their violation of the sanctions of natural religion.

4. That the guilt of the Jews was the effect of their transgressions against the enactments of the Mosaic law.

5. That in our present fallen and degraded condition, which is the consequence of the sin of our first parents, the suggestions and desires of our carnal nature are in a constant state of warfare with our purest spiritual aspirations, and our better knowledge.

6. That, as it was the express object of our Saviour's mission to obliterate the effects of Adam's transgression, and to reconcile us to God by a satisfactory expiation for sin, it is obviously the duty of every Christian, to emancipate himself by every means in his power from the dominion of his carnal and impure appetites, invoking for that purpose the strengthening aid of the Holy Spirit, and trusting to the imputed righteousness of Christ for his final justification.

7. That God's election of the Jewish nation was of a

temporal character only: the spiritual and real election being confined exclusively to such individuals as should subsequently have approved themselves to him by their piety and obedience.

8. That the national election of the Jews, having been an act of gratuitous favour, and designed for a specific object, without reference to any claim of merit on their part, might be, and was, justly withdrawn when the arrangements of Providence so required it.

9. That the admission of the Gentiles into the Gospel covenant implied no loss of spiritual privileges to the believing Jews, but merely the impartial diffusion of God's favour to all nations without distinction, whether Jew or Gentile.

10. That, as the whole of the Israelitish nation was not in reality God's Israel, but the obedient only deserved that appellation; so in the Christian world it is not every one bearing the denomination of Christian, but the pure in heart, and the perseveringly righteous only, who can hope to attain to the blessings resulting from Christ's atonement.

11. That a life of unblemished holiness, of perfect obedience, and of implicit reliance upon God's faithfulness, is absolutely required of every person whatever looking for salvation through the merits of our Redeemer.

Such are the principles *undoubtedly* inculcated in this beautiful Epistle. Whether or not they are compatible with what is usually termed the Calvinistic theory may be matter of opinion, according to the peculiar views and impressions of individuals. Certain it is, that no religious scheme can be pronounced to be that of St. Paul, which is irreconcileable with the admission of the foregoing propositions.

THE

FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL

TO THE

CORINTHIANS.

THE history of St. Paul's residence at Corinth is related in the eighteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. After having remained in that city for the space of eighteen months, during which period he succeeded in making many converts to Christianity, he proceeded to Ephesus, from which place he addressed to his infant Church the following Epistle, which is generally supposed to have been written by him about the time of Easter, in the year of our Lord 57.

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

1 PAUL, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ by
2 the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, to the
Church of God which is in Corinth, to the sancti-
fied in Christ Jesus, the brethren called to be his
saints, and to all others who invoke the name of their
and our common Lord Jesus Christ, in whatever part
3 of the earth—grace and peace be unto you from God
our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ.

SECTION I.

The following Epistle divides itself under two heads, the first of which consists of an earnest expostulation addressed by the apostle to his Corinthian converts on the subject of several grievous abuses recently introduced into that Church, and of which he had received private intimation: whilst the latter conveys his authoritative replies to various interrogatories respecting religion and discipline, which we learn from the context to have been addressed to him by the whole body of that community, for the satisfaction of certain conscientious scruples, and the regulation of their public worship. The picture which this Epistle affords us of the spiritual condition of that infant Christian society is far from gratifying; and in the mild and affectionate remonstrances of the writer it is impossible not to observe the marks of the wounded and generous spirit of one deeply conscious of the unmerited neglect which he had experienced from persons, to the promotion of whose eternal welfare he had so zealously devoted himself, yet willing, so far as an imperious duty would allow, to spare them the pain of reproaches too evidently deserved. The humble and unassuming tone in which he alludes to his own important services; the total absence of rivalry or jealous feeling with which he speaks of his coadjutors in the ministry, with the tempered yet severe energy of his remonstrances on the subject of their party feuds, their relaxed morality, and the indecorum of their

religious meetings, afford a beautiful specimen of what a Christian teacher might and should be in all ages of the Church. We here see one anxiously scrupulous in the performance of his own duties, yet rejoicing in the successful labours of others in the same holy cause no less than in his own, and for both giving glory and thanks to God: one stern and inflexible in the great questions of sound belief and of practical holiness, yet manifesting even in the midst of his severity towards offenders an eager anxiety to hope and believe the best; and ever more desirous to lead them back to the path of duty, by kindling afresh their holy and generous feelings, than to compel them to it by harshness of inculpation, and severity of punishment. So happily has he exemplified in his own person his own beautiful precept, expressed in another Epistle, "Be ye angry, and sin not."

I thank my God continually for you, on account 4
of the divine grace which has been given to you in
Christ Jesus, that you have been enriched by him 5
with all those spiritual gifts, both of language and
of wisdom, which are Christ's own testimony to the 6
soundness of your faith: so that you are deficient 7
in none of the fruits of grace, waiting with patience
for the final revelation and second coming of our
Lord Jesus Christ, who shall strengthen and sup- 8
port you unto the end, that you may stand before
him a blameless community in the great day of our
Lord Jesus Christ. Meanwhile be assured, that 9
that God by whom you were called to a partici-
pation in the redemption of his Son Jesus Christ
our Lord will not recede from his covenant which
he has made with you.

And now I most earnestly exhort you, my bre- 10
thren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that

you would be of one mind, agreeing in the unity of one common faith, and using one common profession of your belief, without the admixture of party
11 distinctions and divisions. For I have received a communication respecting you, my brethren, from some of the household of Chloe, that there are
12 schisms and disagreements amongst you: for instance, one man, as I am told, will say, "I am a disciple of Paul," another, "I am of Apollos," a third, "I am of Peter," a fourth, "I am of Christ
13 himself." What then, are there as many different Christs as there are converts? Did Paul ever profess himself to be more than the mere servant of our common Saviour? was *he* ever crucified as an expiation for your sins? or were you ever baptized
14 to *his* name, as you were to that of Christ? I thank God, if such party distinctions and jealousies are to be the consequence of my coming to preach amongst you, that I have uniformly abstained from baptizing any of you with my own hands, (except indeed
15 Crispus and Caius,) lest I should appear to be a partner in your folly, and to be attempting to esta-
16 blish a peculiar Gospel and sect of my own. I did indeed also, as I now recollect, baptize the household of Stephanas, but besides these I am not aware that I have baptized any others.

17 For the commission which I received from Christ was not to baptize converts, but to preach the Gospel to the unconverted; and that, not with captious eloquence or the words of human wisdom,

but in homeliness and simplicity, in order that the great truth of Christ's atonement might be shewn not to require the aid of ingenuity and eloquence for its support: for to the lost and carnally minded 18
the doctrine of the cross is indeed foolishness, but, to us who look for salvation through it, it is the manifestation of the glorious power of God. As it 19
is written, (Isaiah xxix. 14.) "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the knowledge of the intelligent." Let then the Greek 20
philosopher, let the scribe learned in the Jewish law, let the ingenious expounder of this world's wisdom, come forward, and produce their strong arguments:—I would ask them, "Has not God, by the sublime revelation of Christ crucified, shewn their boasted wisdom to be but folly?" For when 21
the world, though gifted by God their Creator with moral perceptions to know right from wrong, and with the great book of God's creation laid open before them[a], yet failed notwithstanding to form due apprehensions of his sublime and pure nature, it pleased God, by the unattractive and humiliating dispensation of a gratuitous amnesty for sin through an humble reliance in Christ's expiatory merits to save those who turn to him with faith and submission. The Jews indeed demand of us such divine 22
proofs of our mission as were accorded to Moses from mount Sinai in thunders and earthquakes, and

[a] See Romans i. 20.

the Greeks require of us to bend our doctrine to make it accord with their own disputatious and captious philosophy: but not such is the unostentatious revelation which we are deputed to com-
23 municate to mankind. We preach a suffering and crucified Messiah—to the carnal pride of the Jews a stumbling-block: we preach the single-minded doctrine of humility, and poorness of spirit—to the self-complacent wisdom of the Greeks foolishness:
24 but to all who are called from the wranglings of carnal knowledge to the adoption of the righteousness which is from heaven, be they Jews, or be they Greeks, we preach Christ, and Christ only; Christ, in whom are manifested the immensity of the power, and the fulness of the unfathomable
25 wisdom, of God. For those very dispensations of God which to our imperfect apprehensions may appear foolish are far beyond the wisdom of men to find out; and the humblest instruments which he may use far exceed the utmost power of man to
26 equal. Look, for instance, brethren, amongst your own numbers; you can reckon amongst the converts as yet made to our faith very few of those whom the world calls men of learning, [b] very few

[b] Such was the reception given to Christianity by the authorities of this world from the first moment of its promulgation. "Never man spake like this man" was the exculpatory statement of the officers who had been sent by the pharisees to arrest our blessed Saviour's person, but

persons in authority; very few of noble birth; but 27
God, by thus accepting the low and ignorant in preference to the wealthy and the wise, has shewn how this world's folly may put to shame its wisdom, and how this world's weakness may confound and put to shame its strength; and how the low, 28
and despised, and overlooked in this world may, by the divine favour, bring to nought the exalted in rank, and the preeminent in authority. In order 29
that no human being whatever might have any thing of his own, of which to make his boast in the presence of God. Even you yourselves, brethren, 30
owe to his mercy the spiritual advantages which you now derive from your faith in Christ, who has been made to us the manifestation of God's wisdom, and a means of righteousness, and holiness, and

who returned, without having executed their commission, in perfect astonishment at the cogency of his doctrine. "Are ye also deceived? have any of the *rulers* or the *pharisees* believed on him?" was the reply. Of all the miracles worked by Providence for the establishment of the Gospel, none perhaps is more truly wonderful than the final triumph of that unworldly, unassuming, yet resistless principle, silently working its way against the leagued confederacy of wealth and temporal power, until it subjugated the throne of the Cæsars itself. "The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers took counsel together against the Lord and against his Christ. Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their cords from us.—He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh them to scorn."

31 redemption. So true is the exclamation of the prophet, (Jeremiah ix. 23.) "He that boasteth, let him boast in the Lord."

2 With this feeling, my brethren, of the unworldly character of the Christian dispensation, I came first to preach among you the testimony of God, without attempting to recommend myself or my doctrine by 2 any effort at human wisdom or eloquence: and accordingly I taught, and confined myself to one single 3 topic only, namely, "Christ crucified." And this I did (knowing how unattractive such a doctrine must be to carnal hearers) with weakness, and fear, 4 and diffidence; but though my arguments and language possessed none of the attractive charms of learning and eloquence, God gave them weight by the spiritual gifts and the miraculous powers with 5 which he allowed them to be accompanied, in order that your faith might not be built upon the mere foundation of man's wisdom, but upon the mani- 6 festation of the power of God. Yet notwithstanding, weak as my arguments may appear to the unconverted, they are [c] wise to the apprehension of

[c] The self-denying character of the Christian dispensation is quite sufficient to account for the distaste with which it has ever been received by the worldly-minded, without our being necessarily obliged to infer that there is any thing in its doctrines at all revolting to the conclusions of our moral sense or of impartial reason. The substitution of universal charity in the place of self-love; of an implicit submission of the understanding to such portions of the divine

the believer, however ill-adapted to the wisdom of this world, and its perishable distinctions. For the 7

arrangements as are obviously beyond our reach in the room of a prying and dogmatical philosophy; and the total denial of any merit in our seemingly best actions, as affording a claim to a future recompense, must obviously have presented in all ages a formidable barrier against the admission of such a belief to beings whose opinions on moral subjects are confessedly more frequently derived through the medium of their passions than of their intellectual powers. Admitting therefore in its fullest extent the perfect impossibility of unassisted human ignorance ever arriving at the remotest conception of the mysterious Christian scheme, and the almost insuperable impediment which human prejudice must have opposed to its first reception, still it by no means follows as a necessary consequence that our moral and intellectual perceptions must under all circumstances remain incapable of perceiving its entire consistency with itself, and its nice adaptation to the peculiar constitution of our nature. To find our own way through a maze of difficulty is one thing; to apprehend the explanation of it supplied by an understanding superior to our own is another. This distinction may be worth the consideration of those persons, who, in their zeal to advocate the cause of revelation at the expence of human reason, are disposed to depreciate the evidence arising from the apparent internal probability of the Christian dispensation as unsound. No person indeed who is at all aware of the very contracted area of human knowledge would presume much upon that faculty in the discussion of religious topics: but it surely is not to derogate from the dignity of revelation when we assert, that an humble and pious

wisdom which I preach is the mystery of divine wisdom, which, though prepared among the dispensations of God's providence before the beginning of time for the redemption of mankind, he has only within our own age allowed to be openly promul-
8 gated; a mystery which none of the authorities of this world have duly apprehended, otherwise they
9 would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But, as it is truly written by the prophet, (Isaiah lxiv. 4.) "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which
10 God has prepared for them who love him." But God has graciously revealed them to us by his

mind may be enabled to trace in it enough of internal probability, from what we can venture to surmise of God's attributes, to afford, independently of any external proof, a strong foundation for belief in its divine origin. Such at least seems to be the admission of the apostle in the passage before us. It is true that he asserts at the same time that such a faculty of apprehension can descend to us from no other source than that which is the fountain of all true wisdom, the illumination of the Holy Spirit; but that very assertion declares the reality of the faculty so communicated. To argue otherwise were in fact to deprive that sublime dispensation of its hold upon our moral approbation, and to trench upon that satisfied conviction with which so many sincere Christians, who may be unequal to pursuing all the details of external evidence, repose upon it as a full vindication of the otherwise inexplicable arrangements of Providence.

Spirit; that eternal Spirit which searches and sees all things, the mysterious and most secret dispensations of God himself not excepted. For as the spirit of man 11
alone can detect the inmost workings of that individual human breast in which it is stationed, so the Spirit of God alone can penetrate and apprehend all the secret resolves and purposes of God's government. Now we have received, not the fallible spirit 12
of this world, but the direct communications of that all-seeing divine Spirit, so that to us is given to know the operations of God's mercy, as extended to us and to mankind. And it is those divine com- 13
munications which we now preach to the world, not in the artificial language of human wisdom, but as they are suggested to us by the Holy Spirit itself, expounding spiritual things in spiritual language. But the mere natural man apprehends not the re- 14
velations made by the Spirit of God, so as to be able to form a right judgment respecting them; for to him they are foolishness, because he judges of them carnally and not spiritually. He who is il- 15
luminated by the gifts of the divine Spirit loses none of the natural knowledge which he previously possessed, but has a due perception of the things both of the spiritual and carnal world:—but the carnal world, on the other hand, judges not him; "for what man," as says the prophet Isaiah, (xl. 13.) 16
"hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or hath taught him?" But to us the mysterious dispensations of Christ have been communicated.

3 As yet however, my brethren, I have not been
able to speak to you according to the full communi-
cation of God's Spirit which I have received, your
judgments not yet being sufficiently matured to
receive it: I have therefore thus far addressed you
as still in your carnal nature, still children in Chris-
2 tian knowledge: I have fed you from the first with
milk, not with substantial food; for you were not
then, nor are you yet, able to digest the harder
3 mysteries of the doctrine of revelation. You are
still, I repeat, in your carnal nature; for whilst
envy, and strife, and party divisions prevail among
you, may I not truly affirm that you are yet unre-
generated, and walk according to the infirmities of
4 the flesh? And walk you not indeed according to
the flesh, so long as one exclaims, "I am a disciple
of Paul," another, "I am a disciple of Apollos?"
5 And who, let me ask, is Paul, and who Apollos,
but mere mortals, the humble ministers of Christ,
who were the means of your conversion solely be-
6 cause the Lord gave them ability to be so? I per-
haps first planted the good seed, Apollos came after
me and watered, but it was God who in his mercy
7 gave the increase; so that the first planter is no-
thing, and the waterer is nothing; but the glory of
8 the increase is God's only. As to which of us
planted, or which watered, is a matter of no im-
portance, for we are but fellow-labourers in the
same vineyard; and shall receive our pay from our

common Master according to our respective services; ours indeed is the labour of the tillage, but 9
the produce of the soil is the property of God.
You, my brethren, are a building erected to God's
glory. According to the best abilities which God's 10
grace has given to me, I, like a skilful architect,
laid the first foundation; Apollos, or whoever came
after me, laid upon that the superstructure; but,
whoever is the workman, let every man recollect,
that he labours not for his own benefit, but that he
is responsible to God for the goodness of his work.
One foundation, and one only, are we allowed to 11
build upon, that, namely, which was the sole and
single purport of my first communications to you:
—"Jesus Christ." On that foundation it is our 12
common duty, as servants of the same Master, to
build according to the means entrusted to us; and
accordingly one man may build upon it gold, another silver, another marble, another timber, another
thatch, another reeds: and, such as each man's 13
work is, such shall it be proved to be, when the
fearful day of trial comes, when the fire of persecution shall take possession of the building, and
search out each separate part, whether it was well
and substantially laid or not. If any man's work 14
shall stand uninjured through that trial, he will
receive the glorious reward of one who has converted others to righteousness: if it fail in the 15
trial and be consumed, he indeed individually shall

be acquitted, but as one who has lost his labour, and whose property the fire has demolished[d].

16 I have said that you are God's building. So you are; you are God's temple, and the inhabitant
17 within you is God's Holy Spirit. If any man then, instead of doing his utmost to adorn and improve that consecrated building, wilfully injures or pol-

[d] Many a Christian teacher must have had cause, in the apostacy of his flock, to mourn over his lost labours, during those fearful days of persecution which witnessed the first establishment of Christianity. It is impossible to read Pliny's account of his own proceedings at a period somewhat later than that of the apostle, without some sinking of the heart for the weakness of human nature, and feeling grateful to Providence that our faith and resolution have not been exposed to the same formidable trial. "Interrogavi ipsos, an essent Christiani: confitentes iterum ac tertio interrogavi, supplicium minatus: perseverantes duci jussi.—Propositus est libellus sine auctore multorum nomina continens, qui negarent se esse Christianos, aut fuisse, quum, præeunte me, deos appellarent, et imagini tuæ, (Trajani,) quam propter hoc jusseram cum simulacris numinum afferri, thure ac vino supplicarent; præterea maledicerent Christo, quorum nil cogi posse dicuntur qui sunt revera Christiani. Ergo dimittendos putavi. Alii ab indice nominati esse se Christianos dixerunt, et mox negaverunt; fuisse quidem, sed desiisse, quidam ante triennium, quidam ante plures annos; non nemo etiam ante viginti quoque. Omnes et imaginem tuam, deorumque simulacra venerati sunt; ii et Christo maledixerunt." *Plinii Epistolæ*, lib. x. epist. 97.

lutes it, that man will God destroy. For even the earthly temple of God is a holy place, and if so, you, who are God's spiritual temple, should be all of you individually holy. Let no man then deceive 18
himself or you, by adulterating with carnal knowledge the revelation which you have received; but if he comes among you, preaching the wisdom of this world as the Gospel of Christ, let him learn to submit his understanding to what men will call foolishness, and so shall he be truly wise. For as 19
what appears foolish to our carnal nature is wisdom in the sight of God, so what men may term wisdom is mere foolishness in his eyes. As it is written in the book of Job, (Job v. 13.) "He taketh the wise in their own craftiness." And again in the ninety- 20
fourth Psalm, "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise that they are vain." Wherefore, I again 21
repeat, let no one among you boast that he is the disciple and convert of this or that particular teacher, for after all, what are we all but common labourers for your benefit? Let then your in- 22
structor be Paul, if it should so happen; let him be Apollos; let him be Peter; let our task throw us into collision with the authorities of this world; let our lot be life; let it be death; let us be struggling with the difficulties of our mortal condition; or looking forward to the hopes of eternity;—still our labours, be they what they may, are not for our own, but for your advantage:—you are Christ's: 23
and Christ is God's. Deem of us then your 4

teachers, not as ambitious leaders of separate parties, but as the joint servants of Christ, and the stewards of the dispensation of God's mysteries,
2 who are responsible for our trust, and shall, we hope, be found one day to have discharged it faith-
3 fully. With regard to myself therefore, it is a matter of very little moment what judgment you or any human beings may pass upon my services: in fact, I do not pretend to know myself sufficiently to pronounce an opinion how far I may have exe-
4 cuted my commission faithfully: it is true I am[e] conscious of no wilful omissions of my duty, but I am far from asserting therefore that I stand acquitted in all points: it is God only who can pronounce of me how far I have been a profitable
5 servant. Therefore, my brethren, without drawing invidious and unnecessary comparisons between us, let us your several teachers continue to do our work among you to the best of our power, till the Lord himself shall come to judge us all: who shall bring to light and make manifest to all of you what have been the secret workings of our breasts; and then, and not till then, shall each of us receive from God the just commendation which he de-
6 serves. In making these remarks, my brethren,

[e] Οὐδὲν ἐμαυτῷ σύνοιδα. This expression has been inaccurately rendered in our established version, "I know nothing by myself," which is far from conveying the apostle's meaning.

I have only made mention of a few names, such as my own, and that of Apollos, but remember that the sentiment which I wish to inculcate applies to all your teachers whosoever; of whom I would say indiscriminately, "Set not one man up to the depreciation of another;" that you may not, in panegyrizing one man, undervalue the labours and services of his fellow. For admitting that you, or 7
any man, surpass another in talents or spiritual gifts: after all, what have you, but what God has given you, and if *given* to you, why then pride yourself upon it as though it were your own acquisition? So far however from practising this Chris- 8
tian humility, you imagine, as I am informed, that you are already full of all necessary knowledge, that you are rich in spiritual privileges; that you have attained to the fulness of Christian edification, and no longer stand, as formerly, in need of my instruction:—I wish indeed it were so, and that I had nothing now to do but to enjoy together with you in quiet our common edification. For the 9
office of an apostle is indeed one of toil and hardship. God seems to have reserved us, whom he has entrusted with that awful commission, as a spectacle in some great theatre, in which the whole creation, angels and men, are the spectators, and we may exhibit before them the endless variety of our sufferings. *We* bear all the reproaches and 10
contumely of the Christian doctrine which we preach: *you* meanwhile have all the benefit and

enjoyment of it:—*we* are weak: *you* are strong:—*we*
11 are slighted: *you* are courted and respected: from
the first hour of our apostleship to the present, we
have had to sustain hunger and thirst, and naked-
12 ness, and violence, and destitution; yet whilst we
incur these hardships on your account, we earn our
own bread by our[f] own personal and bodily labour;
repaying maledictions with blessings; meeting per-
13 secutions with patient submission; when misrepre-
sented by mankind calmly appealing to their better
feelings, and in all respects submitting for the sake
of the Gospel to be considered as the refuse, the
14 off-scouring of the world. My brethren, I write
not this for your reproach, but, looking upon you
as my beloved children, I am anxious to set you
15 right where I feel that you have been in error: you
may for ought I know have ten thousand teachers
of the Gospel among you at present, but you can-
not have many fathers. I, who first brought you
to the knowledge of Christ, am your spiritual
16 father, and as such, I earnestly require of you, that
my admonitions and influence may have the weight
17 with you which they deserve. And with this feel-
ing, accordingly, I have sent unto you Timothy,
who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord,
to remind you of the tenor of my first instructions
in the ways of Christ, as I still preach them, singly
18 and purely, in every Church which I visit. Some

[f] See Acts xviii. 5.

persons there are among you, I am aware, who calculate upon my not coming to you in person, and presume upon it accordingly: but come I will, 19
with God's blessing, and when I am come, I will judge of each man, not according to the plausibility of his language, but according to his spiritual acquirements: for the kingdom of God does not consist 20
in the shew of words and of eloquence, but in the power resulting from the gifts of the Spirit. How 21
then, my brethren, shall I come, when I do come? must it be with the salutary rod of discipline; or with kindness in the spirit of meekness? One 5
abomination in particular which has been reported to me, I must speak of at present; not only that there is fornication among you, but such fornication as is not tolerated even among the heathen, that a man should be living impurely with his father's wife. And yet whilst these enormities are taking 2
place among you, you are boasting of your spiritual attainments, instead of mourning that such an event has occurred, and doing justice upon the offender by excommunicating him from your society. Absent therefore as I am in person, yet present 3
with you in spirit, as your authorized religious instructor, I feel it my duty to forward by this written communication the sentence which I should have pronounced against the offending party, were I now resident with you, upon the spot: and that sentence is, that, having solemnly convened an as- 4
sembly of all the brethren in the name of our Lord

Jesus Christ, and acting under my authority which
5 I have received from the Holy Spirit, "*you, through the power granted to you by our Lord Jesus Christ, exclude from the Church and all its privileges the person who has committed this sin, for the punishment and affliction of his body in this world, in order that his spirit may be finally saved in the great day*
6 *of the Lord Jesus.*" It is to little purpose, whilst such enormities remain uncensured among you, that you pride yourselves upon your advancement in religious knowledge: know ye not that a little leaven, one tolerated bad example, may leaven and
7 corrupt the whole lump? Purge away then from your community all the old leaven of the sins which you have abjured, and become henceforward a new lump, pure and unleavened; recollecting that Christ our expiatory paschal lamb has been sacri-
8 ficed for us; therefore let us on our part keep the feast, not with the old leaven of our former sins, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness[s], but

[s] It is observable, that through the whole of his writings, St. Paul never omits an opportunity of inculcating the necessity of a strictly moral life, as the legitimate inference derivable from the doctrine of Christ's atonement, and the natural fruits of faith. The Christian dispensation is in fact, from first to last, nothing more than a stupendous display of the total irreconcileableness of sin with the purity of God's government, and of the means adopted by infinite wisdom for its expiation. "The doctrine of Christ's

with the pure and unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

With regard to my injunction not to keep 9
company with fornicators, I wish you however to 10
understand, that I do not mean that you are necessarily to absent yourselves from all societies in which heathens who may be fornicators, or covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, may chance to mingle: because, as the world is constituted, such contingencies, so long as you mingle with it, cannot always be avoided: but what I intend to enjoin is, 11

satisfaction," says Dr. Leland, "is so far from giving the least encouragement to sin, that it tendeth to impress men's hearts with the deepest sense of the heinous evil and malignity of sin, and of God's just displeasure against it. Not only do those who teach that doctrine, as delivered in the Scriptures, insist as strongly as any others upon the necessity of repentance and personal holiness, in order to their acceptance with God, but they maintain that, at the same time that God promiseth pardon to the truly penitent, he taketh care to dispense that pardon in such a way as to make an awful declaration of his hatred against sin, and to vindicate the authority of his government and laws. What can have a greater tendency to prevent our abusing his pardoning mercy, and to excite in us a holy fear of offending him, than to consider that he would not receive even penitent sinners to his grace and favour, without a sacrifice of infinite virtue offered up on their behalf, consisting in the perfect obedience and suffering of the great Mediator?" *View of the Deistical Writers*, Letter 14.

that if any converted brother, calling himself a Christian, be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a slanderer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, have no communings with such a person, nor even
12 sit down with him at the same table. For with regard to the heathen, we profess to hold no jurisdiction over them; our authority is over the mem-
13 bers of our own Church: with regard to the former, leave them to the final judgment of God[h]; but keep your own society pure from all pollution.

[h] From this admonition of the apostle we learn the important lesson, that a Christian is only so far justified in marking by his personal demeanor any strong disapprobation of the irregular lives of others, as by such conduct he may hope to promote edification either by the correction and amendment of the offending party, or by deterring others from adopting a similar course. When neither of these objects is attainable, the rule here given is simple: "keep yourself pure from all contagion of sin, and leave such cases entirely to the final judgment of God." It may be urged indeed that, as society is now constituted, it is scarcely possible for a public breach of morals to take place, without its affording sufficient matter of scandal to make it a peremptory duty in every religious person to express openly his disapproval of it. And such perhaps may be the fact. But still the apostolical precept is not without its use, at least as a corrective to our own inward motives and feelings. We should never forget, that the measure of the censure which we may venture to pronounce upon the vices of our neighbours should be that of the degree of benefit which may be derived by its means to the

One other point which needs correction among 6
you ought now to be mentioned, and that is what
I hear respecting your suits against one another
before the heathen tribunals on points which might
have been arranged by private Christian arbitration.
Is it becoming, let me ask, to bring your private
differences to be judged of by pagan authorities,
instead of by the powers of the Church? Know you 2
not who has said that the saints shall judge the
world? and if so, are you not competent to decide
upon such trifling points as these? are we hereafter 3
to judge angels, and shall we deem the unimportant
transactions of this life above our competency? If 4
then you have litigations of this nature to arrange,
let your arbitrators be, not the rulers of your Church,
for they have higher duties to perform, but the
inferior brethren, who may still be fully adequate to
these secondary duties. A shame and scandal it 5
were indeed to you, if you cannot among your
whole number supply a few persons of competent
understanding to arrange the trivial disputes of one
Christian brother with another, but must come with 6
your wretched bickerings to ask the aid of heathen

cause of religion and good morals. Without such a precautionary rule we could scarcely hope to avoid falling into the sin of spiritual pride, and the fatal mistake of trying our conduct, not by the perfect standard of abstract holiness, but by that of our own imaginary superiority over others, as suggested by the partial estimate of an overweening self-love.

7 magistrates. But, let me ask, why do these disputes exist at all? Is it not better at once to suffer wrong, and to submit to loss, than to right yourself
8 by such methods? *Suffer* wrong do I say? Should I not more correctly designate many of you, were I to assert of you, not that you suffer injustice from others, but that you *commit it yourselves?* that you usurp that which is not your own to take, and that, from your own brethren? Is this the conduct which
9 befits your holy profession? Know you not that the *unjust* shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived:—*neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor those addicted to unnatural appetites,*
10 *nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor slanderers, nor extortioners,* SHALL INHERIT THE
11 KINGDOM OF GOD. And such as I am now describing were some of you:—but you have cleansed yourselves in the waters of baptism: you have consecrated yourselves to a holy life, and you have been acquitted and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Divine Spirit.

SECTION II.

The apostle in the next place proceeds to reply to the several interrogatories respecting religion and morals which had been submitted to his decision by the public assembly of the Corinthian Church. His several answers, together with the spiritual admonitions connected with them, constitute the remaining portion of this Epistle. The following are the topics discussed.

1. On the diversity of meats: whether Christians are required to attend to the old distinctions of the Levitical law, as to the clean and unclean
2. On fornication.

3. On marriage and divorce.
4. On the expediency or inexpediency of circumcision.
5. On the comparative expediency of a single state, and of matrimony.
6. On the use of meats which had been sacrificed in the heathen temples.
7. On the decorum and reserve of the female character, and the inexpediency of women taking a part in the public services of the Church.
8. On the decorous administration of the Lord's Supper.
9. On the gifts of the Holy Spirit; the diversity of their nature and character, and their comparative utility.
10. On the decorum to be observed in the celebration of divine worship, with regulations for the promotion of that object.
11. On the resurrection of the body.

ON DIVERSITY OF MEATS.

With regard to your question respecting diversity 12
of meats, I simply answer, that "all are equally allowable as food; but that, at the same time, there may be reasons which render them not all equally expedient; all may be in themselves lawful, but we are not therefore to make ourselves the slaves of our appetites." You will say that God gave food 13
for the belly, and made the belly to require food: be it so, yet recollect also that he will shortly destroy both one and the other.

ON FORNICATION.

On the subject of fornication, it is most certain that our bodies were given to us not for purposes of impurity, but that we might consecrate them to the Lord, as our Lord has already consecrated them, by

himself condescending to assume our human na-
14 ture; and accordingly as God raised the body of our
Redeemer from the grave, so will he by his almighty
15 power also raise ours at the last day. Remember
then that you are members of Christ himself, inte-
gral portions of his mystical body. And are then
our bodies, which are already members of Christ,
and look to be, as he has been, raised up incor-
ruptible from the grave, to become the members
16 also of an harlot? By no means. Know you not
that he who associates with an harlot, becomes one
with her; according to what has been declared
in holy writ respecting the intercourse of the sexes:
17 "they two shall be one flesh?" But he who unites
himself with Christ, is one with Christ in spirit and
18 holiness. Fly then, I intreat you, from fornication:
other sins are external to man's corporeal nature,
and, however otherwise blameable, leave his own
person at least uncontaminated; but fornication is
a sin against, and a degradation of, a man's own
19 self. Know you not also that your bodies are the
temple of that Holy Spirit which dwells within you,
and which God himself gave to you: and that they
20 are not your own property, but God's, purchased for
him by the blood of Christ? Glorify then God both
in your bodies, and in your spirits, for both are alike
God's property.

ON MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE.

7 Your next question is as to the regulations which

I would have you adopt respecting marriages, and
the legality of divorce. My first answer to it is,
that, where it is possible, a single state is in my
opinion preferable: but as every one may not have 2
the gift of continence, then for the sake of avoiding
sin, I say, let any man who is so disposed have his
own wife, and any woman her own husband; and 3
so, let the husband associate affectionately with his
wife, and the wife with her husband; with this 4
understanding, that the wife is to submit to the
wishes of the husband, and the husband to those of
the wife. Accordingly let not the one repel the 5
other, excepting at such times when they may
abstain from one another by mutual agreement, on
peculiar occasion of prayer and fasting; after which
let them return to one another as before, that nei-
ther of them may be tempted to sin by incontinency
in any other quarter. In speaking thus, however, 6
I wish to be considered rather as permitting mar-
riage, than as recommending it universally: since 7
I would rather see others living singly and chastely
as I do, if possible; but our temperaments have
been differently constituted by God, and what is
practicable by one, is not always equally so by
another. To the single therefore, whether they 8
have continued unmarried from the first, or are in a
state of widowhood, my private opinion is, that it is
better for them to remain single, as I am myself;
at the same time if they doubt their own powers of 9
continence, let them marry, for marriage is prefer-

10 able to a state of painful restraint. But to the
married I say, or rather not I, but Christ, (for it is
our Lord's own injunction,) "Let not the wife
11 separate from her husband, or, at least, if she do
so, and does not return to him, let her abstain
from marriage elsewhere: and according to the
same rule, let not the husband put away his wife."
12 This command we have from Christ himself. With
regard to that part of your question which you put
to me on the subject of marriages between parties,
of whom one is a Christian and the other a heathen,
as our Lord has left no injunction on such a case,
my own opinion is as follows. "In a case where
the husband is Christian and the wife heathen, and
she is willing to continue to live with her husband,
13 let her do so; and by the same rule let them act,
where the husband is heathen and the wife Christian,
and the husband is content to continue to live with
his wife; that is to say, let such a marriage be in
14 all respects binding[k]. For the blessing attending the

[k] St. Paul's decision on the subject of this difficulty, which occasionally arose in the early ages of the Church from the intermarriage of Christian converts with pagans, or, which was more frequently the case, the conversion of one only of the parties to Christianity where both the husband and wife had originally been pagans, is a beautiful specimen of the caution and good sense requisite for the adaptation of a previously existing rule to a new combination of circumstances not contemplated, or at least not fully explained, by the original enactor.

belief of the one party sanctifies and extends to the matrimonial connexion with the other; as it does

In our Saviour's sermon on the mount (Matt. v. 32.) we find the permission of divorce expressly limited to the single case of adultery; obviously upon the equitable ground that, where one out of two contracting parties has wilfully broken through a reciprocal compact, the other unoffending person ought no longer to be bound by it to his own injury. When however Christianity begun to find its way through heathen countries, a fresh perplexity arose from the occasional difference of religion between the husband and the wife. Our Saviour's rule allowing of no divorce excepting in the case of adultery only, a Christian married to an heathen was thus incidentally engaged in a tie which religious obligation rendered indissoluble to the person so circumstanced, whilst, on the other hand, the heathen married to a Christian possessed that liberty of divorce which the laws of the Roman empire allowed indiscriminately to all its subjects, without the intervention of any scruples of conscience to prevent his taking advantage of it. It is evident therefore that here was the instance of a compact not entailing a reciprocity of obligation between the contracting parties, the Christian having no legal redress should the heathen be disposed to take that advantage which the constitution of his country allowed for releasing himself from the restraints of marriage.

The decision of St. Paul therefore, though at first sight it may appear to be an infringement of our Saviour's exclusive rule, is in reality confirmatory of it, and founded upon the same just principle; namely, that in every mutual covenant the want of faith in one of the persons

also to the children who may be born from such marriages, and who may be looked upon as in all
15 respects the progeny of Christian wedlock. Should it however happen that the heathen husband or wife should choose to relinquish the connexion, let them do so; for the happiness of a Christian brother or sister ought not to be sacrificed to circumstances over which they have no control; remember however, that we ourselves as Christians are not justified, in these cases, in assuming that liberty of divorce, which we have no power to prevent our heathen connexions from taking advantage of, should
16 it please them to do so. Perhaps it may so happen, that by continuing to live with her heathen husband the Christian wife may be the means of his conversion; and perhaps the Christian husband may in

concerned operates a virtual release from any conscientious obligation in the other. Still however the apostle, with a becoming humility, makes this distinction between his own decision of the case in question, and the law of his divine Master; that whilst he refers to the latter as an infallible dictum, he advances the former as merely the best conclusion to which he can arrive in his attempt to accommodate an unforeseen contingency to what may be presumed of the real intention and object of the legislator. It was probably with a view to obviate the recurrence of this difficulty that in a subsequent passage of this Epistle (chap. vii. 39.) he enjoins widows, if entering upon a second marriage, to confine their choice to such persons for their future husbands as shall be professed Christians.

like manner promote the salvation of his heathen wife. At all events, be that as it may, it is not for 17
us to break a connexion which we have deliberately entered into, and which God has sanctioned." This my injunction in reply to the question which you have submitted to me I wish to be understood as intended to apply to all the Churches indiscriminately.

ON CIRCUMCISION.

My next answer is to your question, which you 18
urge as to the expediency of adopting that method, which some have recommended, of marking their abjuration of the Mosaic law by extirpating the mark left upon their bodies by the operation of circumcision. My reply is a simple one: let every one remain as he is. He that has been circumcised, let him continue so: he that is uncircumcised, let him not be circumcised. The real question is, not 19
whether we happen to have been circumcised or otherwise, which is a matter of perfect indifference, but whether we are sincerely obedient to the commands of God. And on this principle I would say 20
to every person who is apt to speculate upon the expediency of this or that change in his temporal circumstances, "remain patiently as you are without repining." Are you, for instance, in a state of 21
slavery to another? regard it not, but submit to the condition in which God has placed you: though, at the same time, if you have the offer of your

22 liberty[1], it is your duty to avail yourself of it: for
a slave who has been admitted to the terms of
Christ's covenant has become consequently Christ's
freedman; as he who, being free, is admitted into
the same covenant, is consequently Christ's bond-
23 man. Being therefore all of us ransomed with no
less a price than Christ's blood, and accordingly
devoted to his peculiar service, it does not become
us, provided we can justly avoid it, to be the slaves
24 of merely human beings like ourselves. Still how-
ever I repeat, "remain patiently, as submitted to

[1] In this injunction we have a beautiful instance of the moderation of St. Paul's principles, and of his unwillingness to disturb unnecessarily by a premature, and consequently injudicious, reformation the then existing order of society. The opinion which he pronounces against the expediency of slavery as repugnant to the spirit of Christianity is perfectly decisive; but he notwithstanding recommends a cheerful submission to it, in persons whose emancipation could not be legitimately obtained, as the becoming acquiescence of a resigned disposition to the will of Providence, and a proper sacrifice of self-interest to the tranquillity of mankind. In denouncing however the principle, Christianity has laid the axe effectually to the root of the evil; and the consequence has accordingly been, that compulsory servitude has in the course of ages entirely disappeared from the greater portion of the Christian world, or at least, where it still unfortunately exists, remains only as a blemish deprecated even by those amongst whom by an unhappy combination of circumstances it is unwillingly retained.

God's will, in whatever station he may have thought fit to place you."

ON THE COMPARATIVE EXPEDIENCY OF THE SINGLE AND MARRIED STATE.

You ask me, in the next place, "what is my 25
opinion respecting a state of virginity; how far it is more pleasing in the sight of God than that of marriage?" On this subject I have no positive injunction to give, though my individual opinion as an apostle bearing God's commission may deserve to have some weight. My opinion then is, that under the pre- 26
sent distressed circumstances of the Church, such a condition is certainly preferable to the married state: that is, I mean, for such as are at this moment single. Where indeed a person is already married, 27
no doubt it is his duty to continue as such; but those who are still unmarried, I would certainly at present wish to dissuade from engaging themselves in matrimony[m]. Still if a man choose to marry, he 28

[m] It is observable, that the Apostle's recommendation of a state of celibacy in preference to marriage is founded upon the then troubled state of the world, and particularly the persecutions to which Christians were at that time liable: *διὰ τὴν ἐνεστῶσαν ἀνάγκην.* A similar sentiment is recorded in the Gospels as having been expressed by our Saviour, when prophetically describing the miseries which would befal the inhabitants of Jerusalem at the time of its final capture he observed, "Woe unto them that are with child

commits no sin, and if a woman choose also to marry, she commits no sin on her part: they must however make up their minds to incur many inconveniences and annoyances by so doing. These however I do
29 not wish to enumerate: but at all events there is one thing which it behoves us all, married or single, alike to recollect, namely, that our time on earth is short; and that they who have wives shall soon be as
30 though they had them not; and they that sorrow, as though they sorrowed not; and they who rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they who buy, as
31 though they possessed not; and they who use this world, as though they used, or rather I might say abused, it not; for the world and all that belongs
32 to it passes away. One advantage undoubtedly the single state possesses over the married, and on that account I give it the preference in recommending it to you; namely, that it has fewer of the pressing wants and cares of this life to provide for: a single

and give suck in those days." But this declaration, as well as the former, was merely a prudential admonition, without the slightest reference to any supposed religious and spiritual advantage attaching to celibacy as contrasted with a married life. How far is this rational view of the question from sanctioning the superstitious obligation to a single state, which at the expence of so many of the kindly feelings of our nature, and to the hazard of the cause of good morals, the Church of Rome so inexorably forces upon many of its members!

man has nothing to do but to attend to his spiritual concerns, how he may best do his duty to God; a 33 married man, on the other hand, has the affairs of his domestic life to provide for, and the claims of a wife to attend to. In like manner the married and 34 the single women have their different allotment of duty and occupation. The latter can give her undivided attention to the care of her soul, that she may be pure in God's sight both as to body and mind: but the former is entangled in the occupations of her family, and in the discharge of the duties which she owes to her husband. I have 35 made these observations for the purpose of explaining what I conceive to be altogether for your interests to adopt: at the same time without any wish to lay upon you any unnecessary restraint, but solely anxious that you should from your own free will do what is becoming and expedient before God. Should however any father imagine that he 36 is acting unjustly by his daughter in imposing any restraint upon her inclinations respecting marriage, if she be of full age, and there be no other inexpediency in the engagement, let him give his consent to it without scruple, and let the parties marry if so disposed. But he on the contrary who may be 37 otherwise inclined, and from his daughter's age or other circumstances may deem her marriage inexpedient, being conscientiously satisfied that such is the case, will act well in keeping her single. So 38 that he who gives his daughter in marriage, with

propriety, does well; but he who, with propriety,
39 restrains her from marriage, does better. But be it
ever remembered, that a woman, once married, is
indissolubly bound to her husband so long as he
lives: in case of his death, she may take a second
40 husband, provided he be a believer in Christ. She
would indeed in my judgment act more wisely by
remaining in her widowhood, but let her use her
own discretion. I think however that in giving
this opinion I am speaking under the direction of
the Holy Spirit.

ON MEATS SACRIFICED TO IDOLS.

8 [n] With regard to your next difficulty, for which
you ask my decision, namely, "as to the propriety

[n] The question respecting the use of meats which had been sacrificed to idols was one of no small worldly moment to Christians living as a small isolated sect in the midst of a numerous heathen population. The flesh of animals which had been so sacrificed was, as we infer from various passages in the classical writers, after the consumption of certain parts upon the altar in honour of those imaginary deities, either immediately consumed by the assembled votaries in a species of public feast, or, if not so disposed of, was subsequently sold in the open shambles for the emolument of the ministers of religion. The converts to Christianity were thus exposed to a double loss and inconvenience, by their adoption of a new creed; being excluded by their conscientious scruples not only from partaking in those festive banquets celebrated within the

and innocence of eating meat which has been previously sacrificed to an idol;"—I see the tendency

precincts of the temple, which, from their frequent occurrence, formed no inconsiderable feature in the social habits of that period; but also from the purchase of many of the usual articles of human food, when offered for sale in the common market. The interested sophistry of the Corinthian converts had however, as it appears, invented a convenient argument, calculated to reconcile their personal indulgence with their newly acquired scruples, and to justify their conformity with their pagan neighbours in both these particulars. The argument is a curious specimen of the strange subterfuges which worldly men will have recourse to when the observance of the duties of religion involves the relinquishment of some temporal advantage. To participate in the feast upon a sacrifice offered to any *evil being*, or to purchase for domestic purposes the meat so sacrificed, knowing it to be such, was, they readily admitted, to become partakers in an act of unhallowed worship. But the false deities of the pagans they asserted were *not* evil beings, inasmuch as they were in fact *no beings at all;* mere non-entities; and as such could not possibly be the object of actual worship, nor entail any real pollution upon the sacrifices offered to them through the ignorance of their votaries. Under the protection of this salvo, they appear to have accommodated themselves to the practices of their pagan neighbours, and, as we infer from the indignant remonstrance of St. Paul, to have urged this wretched evasion as an ingenious and satisfactory exculpation of their conduct to the apostle himself. His answer is such as might be expected from a manly understanding, united to a humble and re-

of the argument which you suggest in exculpation of this practice, namely, that "a fictitious deity is

ligious mind. He breaks at once through their casuistical cobwebs, by a direct appeal to their own practical good sense, and the unsophisticated character of the religion they professed: proving that, even by their own admissions as implied by their knowledge of the Levitical sacrifices, and their own habitual celebration of the Eucharist, the participation in the subject matter of a sacrifice was bonâ fide a participation in that peculiar faith and worship to which such sacrifices were annexed. His injunction accordingly on this point is peremptory. "Where you *know* the meat which you find served at table, or exposed in the shambles, to have formed part of an idolatrous offering, abstain scrupulously from it." Yet at the same time, with a beautiful liberality of feeling which would not strain an inconvenient precept beyond the point actually required by the circumstances of the case, he notwithstanding allows them to eat indiscriminately from the meats set before them, provided they can do so in perfect ignorance of the previous facts, even though they may have purposely abstained from asking questions which might lead to an explanation. Thus far he admits that they may proceed innocently: one step farther would be an act of at least implied idolatry, incompatible with the purity of the Christian profession, and highly dangerous as an example to others. That this apostolical injunction had its effect in deterring professed Christians at a subsequent period from such equivocal compliance with pagan usages may be inferred from that Epistle of Pliny, from which an extract was given in a former note, in which that writer states, that, in consequence of the frequent abjura-

a nonentity, and consequently can entail no real pollution upon meat so sacrificed;" but I would answer in reply, that these subtile and casuistic distinctions savour more of intellectual vanity in the proposer, than of that simplicity and rectitude of heart which is our best wisdom. For be assured, 2 that the man who is vain of the superior acuteness of his understanding is far more likely to fall into serious errors in judgment than the man, who, mak- 3 ing his love for God his guide, derives his knowledge of practical morality from that best and holiest source. It is indeed perfectly true, as you say, 4 that "an idol is an absolute nonentity," and that there is only one true and existent God. For though 5 there be many so styled deities in heaven or upon the earth, (whether called gods, or lords, or by any other appellation,) still *we* at least know that there 6 is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things, and from whom we exist: and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whose agency we and all things were created: but unanswerably true as this ab- 7 stract assertion is, still it does not meet the case in

tions of Christianity, produced by the increased severity of the government, the victims in the public markets, which were formerly scarcely saleable, have at length once more found abundant purchasers. "Certè satis constat, prope jam desolata templa cæpisse celebrari, et sacra solennia diu intermissa repeti; *passimque vœnire victimas, quarum adhuc rarissimus emptor inveniebatur.*"

point. The real grievance is, that a scrupulous person, eating meat which has been so sacrificed, is apt to be fearful, lest in so doing he shall have given his concurrence to an idolatrous rite, and
8 feels his conscience wounded accordingly. Granting, therefore, that particular meats neither give nor diminish our merit in the sight of God, that there is nothing gained by their use, and nothing lost by
9 our abstaining from them, still it is our duty to take heed that this liberty in which we may think fit to indulge respecting things indifferent may not prove a stumbling-block to a scrupulous and tender
10 conscience. For if a person of this description sees you, who presume upon your stronger understanding, sitting down to table in a heathen temple, is there not danger lest he should impose silence upon his scruples against his better judgment, from mere deference to your authority, and thus become virtually a participator in an act of idolatry? for such
11 it would be to him: and thus, may not the effect of your subtile distinctions be the ruin of a soul for
12 which Christ has died? Be assured, that when you thus sin against your brethren, by bringing their principles into danger, even when their scruples may appear over nicely defined, you sin against Christ
13 himself. For my own part, if my eating this or that description of meat is to be a stumbling-block in the way of my brother's conscience, most assuredly I shall uniformly make a point to abstain from it.

Do not however infer°, because I may from prin- 9
ciple decline to avail myself of my Christian liberty,

° St. Paul is here led incidentally by the course of his argument into a digression, in which he takes an opportunity of repelling certain misrepresentations under which he had himself laboured during his intercourse with the Corinthian Church, on account of his having declined from motives of delicacy to avail himself of those temporal advantages and emoluments, which, as an apostle devoted to an harassing and laborious duty, he was justly entitled to claim. We learn from the early part of this Epistle, that strong party feeling and jealousies between the disciples of the various Christian teachers were at this moment distracting that community; and that even Paul himself, although the first planter of the Gospel in that district, had been latterly considered by some of his turbulent followers rather as the ambitious head of a rival faction, than as a disinterested fellow-labourer with others in the service of his Redeemer. Conscious of the delicate situation in which he was placed, among nominal converts to the faith, but of whom a large proportion had as yet imbibed but little of the true Christian spirit, he had endeavoured, by rendering his toilsome services perfectly gratuitous, to stifle these unworthy jealousies, and to afford an unanswerable refutation to the calumnies of his impugners. Even this exemplary forbearance however does not appear to have entirely attained its object. Had he submitted to derive his support and maintenance from the contributions of the public, as the other apostles appear to have done, he would undoubtedly, as he knew, have been charged with preaching the Gospel from mercenary and interested motives; but in declining to do so, he was on the other hand imme-

and of that right of maintenance which I may justly claim at your hands, that therefore that right does

diately met by another and opposite calumny, which, if less opprobrious, was certainly not less injurious. Because he received no remuneration for his ministry from the Church of Corinth, it was therefore argued by his opponents, that he ought not to be considered as their peculiar and acknowledged apostle; and that his forbearance in demanding such a compensation was a tacit avowal on his part that he had no title to any jurisdiction or power of interference with them. His indignant refutation of this captious argument forms the main subject of the following digression, which extends to verse 14, of chap. x. in which he strongly asserts his undoubted right of maintenance, should he be, as he was not, disposed to claim it, and proceeds to state the reasons which had induced him to adopt that self-denying system which had been so uncandidly misconstrued. We have only to cast our eyes over this ingenuous vindication of himself, in order to observe all the characteristics of a disposition of the very first degree of excellence; of one sensitive yet magnanimous; uncompromising yet kind and generous; conscious, as he himself expresses it, of having laboured more than all the other apostles, yet at the same time diffident of the value of his own exertions, and fearful, lest when called to his final account he should be found to have slumbered at his post. The subject of his exculpation is of a merely temporary character, and of momentary interest; but we may confidently assert, that the example which it affords, of what an effective and disinterested labourer in Christ's vineyard should be, will be of value to mankind so long as the world shall last.

not exist. Am I not an apostle? am I not free to
claim if I please, or not to claim if I please? Have
I not been permitted to see in a miraculous manner
our Lord Jesus Christ himself? are not you, all of
you, my converts in the Lord? If I am not an 2
apostle to others, at least I am one to you, for you
by the confession of your faith at this moment are
sufficient proofs of the success of my apostleship
among you. My answer then to those who may 3
choose to speculate upon the reserve which I prac-
tise, in that I do not, like your other teachers,
become a burden upon you for my maintenance, is
this. Have I not a right to require a due provision 4
of meat and drink at your expence if I think fit?
Have I not a right to require the like maintenance 5
for a wife, were I to bring one among you, as the
other apostles have done in their several commu-
nities; and among the rest, our Lord's own bre-
thren, and Peter? Or am I and Barnabas the only 6
apostles who are to be obliged, even against our
will, to subsist by the actual labour of our own
hands? Yet, let me ask, what soldier ever serves 7
in the field without his remuneration of pay? what
husbandman cultivates a vineyard, without partak-
ing of its produce? what shepherd feeds a flock,
yet has no share in the milk it affords? Are these 8
my own arguments, invented specially to serve my
interests on the present occasion? What then says 9
Moses in the law? (Deut. xxv. 4.) "Thou shalt
not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn." Did

God give this injunction solely that you may be kind and just to your brute animals, and is not the application to be made to the human race also?
10 Surely it was enjoined for the sake of all of us, as a salutary and wise regulation, that the ploughman may hope to receive the remuneration for his labours, and that the thresher may thresh with a
11 certain assurance of his compensation also. Surely then, if I have fed you with spiritual knowledge, it is not asking much in return if I require the bread
12 of this world as my recompense. If your other teachers at this moment claim such an allowance at your hands, much more may I. But I have not required it, nor do I now require it; and upon this principle; namely, that I may not, by becoming an incumbrance to you, diminish the effects of my ministry as a preacher of the Gospel of Christ.
13 Look abroad elsewhere, and you find universally, that they who minister in sacred things live by the offerings of the pious; and they who wait upon the altar feed upon the things sacrificed upon the altar:
14 and such, we know, was the authority given by our Saviour himself to his disciples when he sent them
15 upon their mission. (Matt. x. 9, &c.) But I have not availed myself of this right; nor do I make these observations with the slightest intention of so doing in future; for I would rather die than it should be said of me that I preached the Gospel for
16 hire or reward. For, after all, it is no merit of mine that I preach the Gospel; on the contrary, I

have received the positive command of my Redeemer to do so, and woe indeed unto me if I preach it not. Willingly accordingly, or unwillingly, I 17
must at all events preach it. If willingly, I have my reward as a faithful and zealous servant; if unwillingly, I have no claim to a recompence for having only done what was a peremptory duty.

What then is the remuneration I took to? this: 18
that I may have been found to have spread abroad the Gospel of Christ without having been burthensome to any one, or abusing the just rights which my apostleship gave me. For though a full master 19
of my own actions in this and other respects I have waved my claims, and made myself a servant to every man, that I might gain the more converts to my Saviour. With this feeling it was that, whilst 20
I resided amongst the Jews, I lived as they did, sacrificing my Christian liberty, and adopting all the scrupulous observances of their law, that I might save the souls of those within the law: as, on the 21
other hand, I omitted the ritual ceremonies of the law whilst residing among the Gentiles, (not indeed without a due observance of the law of God as communicated to us through Christ,) in order that I might be the means of salvation to the Gentiles: and on the same principle I have submitted my own 22
understanding on other occasions to the scruples of timid and weak consciences, rather than distress them by the assertion of my innocent privileges: and thus have made myself all things to all men, in

23 the hope of saving all. And this I do for the sake
of the Gospel, in the trust that I may finally be
admitted to share in the fulness of its blessings.
For it is not by remiss and relaxed exertions that I
can expect to obtain the glorious reward to which I
24 aspire. You know that in your own public games,
though all the competitors in a race may run, it is
only one who achieves the prize;—(may you all
run in such a manner in your spiritual race that you
25 may attain to your immortal object;—) and you know
also what a system of privations and discipline of
their bodies the various athletes will submit to
for the sake of training themselves for the competi-
tion in which they engage; and yet their object is
a perishable crown of laurel or parsley, whilst ours
26 is the glorious crown of immortality itself. I then,
conscious of the immensity of the object for which I
contend, run in this great race with all the exertion
in my power; and wrestle, not as in sport, but
with the desperation of one determined upon victory,
27 struggling with all my might for the mastery over
my carnal and corrupt affections, lest I, who have
excited others to this great spiritual contest, should
myself be found wanting when brought to trial.

10 Rely not then yourselves, my brethren, upon the
mere fact of your [p] past conversion: nor, because

[p] The whole tenor of the preceding and following passages appears to be quite irreconcileable with the doctrine of the indefeasibility of grace.

you have become partakers of the Christian covenant, imagine therefore that you have no longer any spiritual hazards to incur. Recollect the case of our Jewish forefathers in the wilderness. All of them were alike defended by the pillar of the cloud, and miraculously preserved in their passage through the Red sea; and by that passage were all baptized 2 and initiated into the Mosaic covenant, by which God confirmed his promise to them as his own peculiar people. And all of them partook of the 3 miraculous gift of manna in the wilderness, and all 4 drunk of that wonderful stream of water produced from the solid rock; (a stream typical of that pure fountain which gushes from the Rock of ages, of which we are assured that he who drinks shall thirst no more;)—and yet, what was the result?— 5 they provoked God to anger in the wilderness,— and they perished. These things then are an awful 6 and instructive warning to ourselves, that we do not forfeit our privilege as they did, by lusting after the carnal vanities of this world, as they did after the flesh-pots of Egypt; neither, my brethren, be 7 you idolaters, as were some of them, of whom the sacred historian relates, (Exod. xxxii. 6.) "the people sat down to eat and drink the sacrificed meats, and then rose up to dance their idolatrous revels:" neither let us commit fornication as they 8 also committed, and perished in one day three and twenty thousand: neither let us grieve the Spirit of 9 our Saviour as they grieved him, and were destroyed

10 by serpents: neither murmur you against God, as
some of them murmured, and were destroyed of the
11 destroyer. My brethren, these punishments fell
upon them as a fearful warning to others; and were
written for our instruction, under this more perfect
12 dispensation to which we have been called. Where-
fore I say again, let him who thinks that he is
13 secure, take heed lest he fall. Your temptations
may be severe, but they are only such as all man-
kind must expect to encounter; and be assured
that God will not withhold the support which he
has promised to all those who call upon him for it,
but will, with the temptation, also make a way to
escape, that you may be able to bear it.

14 And now, my brethren, to return to my former
admonition, respecting meats sacrificed to idols, let
me exhort you, avoid every thing which can by im-
15 plication involve you in the sin of idolatry. You
urge that an idol is a nonentity, and that therefore
you may innocently partake in meats which have
been sacrificed to such merely imaginary beings.
But mark how your own admission may be turned
against yourselves, and how your own most sacred
16 ceremonies will detect your own sophistry.—The
cup of the holy communion of the Lord's Supper,
do we not all partake of it, and in so doing *give our
assent to the great doctrine of redemption by Christ's
blood, of which it is the type?* Do we not in like
manner, *in participating the consecrated bread which
we eat, make ourselves one with Christ, and Christ*

with us? For by eating in common from that one 17
mysterious bread, we become one bread, and one
body with Christ. Look again to the Jewish sacri- 18
fices. *Do not those who eat of the sacrificed meats,*
mean to imply their participation in the covenant with
Him to whom those sacrifices are offered? My an- 19
swer then to your argument is this. I stop not to
sophisticate upon such speculations as the entity or
nonentity of the heathen idols, but I assert plainly 20
that the heathens *do* intend to address their sacri-
fices to other beings than the true God whom we
worship, and that you cannot therefore, consistently
with your admission in your own most solemn acts
of devotion, partake with innocence of the sacri-
ficed meats, as in so doing *you are making yourselves*
one with their false gods, and assenting to an idola-
trous worship. You cannot at once drink of the 21
cup of our Lord's blood, and of the cup of their
false and abominable deities; nor participate in the
communion of the Lord's body, and the communion
of their detestable superstition. Are we lightly to 22
set up rival objects of adoration against the God
we worship; and if we provoke his wrath, are we
strong enough to stand against it? You talk of 23
your Christian liberty, but recollect that that liberty
must be compatible with expediency and edification,
or it ceases to be innocent: remember also, that 24
whatever your own opinions may be, you cannot
eat innocently, so long as in so doing you wound
a brother's conscience, which it is your duty to

25 spare. What meat indeed you find for sale in the
shambles, (though even that may have been, as we
know it often is, previously sacrificed in some
idolatrous ceremony,) still, such meat you may
without scruple purchase and use, *provided you do
not actually know it to have been so sacrificed*, as
in that case you are neither directly nor indirectly
sanctioning any profane rite; and we know that all
26 God's creatures are originally good, as it is written
in the twenty-fourth Psalm, "the earth is the
27 Lord's, and the fulness thereof." On the same
principle, should any of your pagan neighbours in-
vite you to a feast, and you like to attend, you may
without scruple eat whatever is placed before you,
so long as you do not know the meat so served to have
28 *previously formed part of an idolatrous offering.* The
moment however that you learn that it has been
applied to such an unhallowed purpose, then abstain
from it for the sake of your own conscience, and that
you may not wound the consciences of others: for, to
avail myself once more of my last quotation, "the earth
29 is *the Lord's*, and the fulness thereof." Remember,
I say, not only for the sake of your own conscience,
but that *you may not wound that of others.* But
why, you will say, is my innocent Christian liberty
to be made subservient to another man's mistaken
30 and ill-judged scruples? If I eat with no bad in-
tention, and give God thanks for what I eat, am I
31 to be blamed for so doing? I answer, that whether
in eating or drinking, or in any other occupation,

our first object should be God's glory: and accord- 32
ingly I say again, be not, even as you may suppose
harmlessly, stumbling-blocks to the conscience of
Jew, or Gentile, or of any member of God's church
whatever. Such has been invariably the rule which 33
I have laid down for my own practice; not seeking
what may best suit my own personal convenience,
but that far greater object, the salvation of others.
In this respect, imitate me, for my model is no less 11
than that of Christ himself.

ON THE DECORUM OF THE FEMALE CHARACTER.

And now, to turn to another subject, I cannot 2
but commend you, my brethren, for the deference
with which you have attended to many of my
former injunctions: and accordingly, calculating
upon a continuance of the same obedience from
you, I send you the following regulations for pro-
moting the decorum of your public places of worship,
and for a proper celebration of the divine offices.

I wish you then to recollect, that as Christ is the 3
head of every man, so is a man the head of a
woman, as the head of Christ is God the Father.
Every man therefore who officiates in the public 4
prayers, or public exhortation, with a veil upon his
head, is acting unseemly, as abandoning the privilege
and superiority of his sex. Every woman on the 5
contrary officiating in like manner without a veil,
acts inconsistently with her sex, the natural profu-

sion of hair which God has given to the female marking what is the attire most befitting her condition; and accordingly for a woman to appear in public without a veil is little less unbecoming than
6 to see her at once with her head shorn. If she will dispense with the head dress which becomes her sex, why not part with her hair also? Let her
7 then wear a veil, as propriety requires. A man should appear in public with his head uncovered, as standing on the earth in God's place, and being
8 God's image: but the woman is man's image, for the man was not formed from the woman, but the
9 woman from the man; and the man was not created as an helpmate for the woman, but the woman as
10 an helpmate for the man. Wherefore a woman ought to wear her head veiled out of deference to
11 the rulers [q] of the Church. But in the sight of

[q] I am not satisfied that the word ἄγγελος ought in this place to be rendered according to the sense which I have given to it, but it appears to me to labour under fewer difficulties when thus explained, than when taken according to its more usual meaning "angel" as in our established version. The testimony of early antiquity may be pleaded for both constructions: for some of those in support of the one here given see Bingham's Origines Ecclesiasticæ, book ii. chap. ii. sect. 11. The well known passage in the Apocalypse respecting the "angels," *i. e.* "bishops," of the seven Churches is also in favour of the same interpretation of the word. See also Prideaux's Connection of the Old and New Testament, part i. book vi. sect. 4.

God, as members of the Christian covenant, the man and the woman are both equal. For as the 12
first woman was formed out of the flesh of the first man, so every subsequent man is born of a woman; and both, as every thing else, are God's creatures. Ask your own natural feelings; is it consistent with, 13
or becoming her sex for a woman to pray publicly with her head uncovered? I have already observed 14
that nature itself has marked this distinction between the sexes. Long hair is unbecoming in a man as bespeaking effeminacy; but it is ornamental 15
to a woman, making a beautiful clothing for the head, and suggesting that style of dress which is most becoming to her situation.

ON THE DECOROUS ADMINISTRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

As to the emulations, and party feelings which 16
have crept even into your places of worship, and to which I have already alluded, I can neither give them the sanction of my own approbation, nor that of the Churches of God: on the contrary, I must 17
express to you the displeasure I feel upon that subject, as the effect of these disputes can be nothing else than that of converting your public assemblies from places of worship and brotherly love into scenes of unbrotherly animosity and disturbance. And accordingly when you are met together for the 18
ostensible purpose of common prayer, I hear, in the

first place, that doctrinal differences on points of faith are beginning to shew themselves amongst you; a circumstance I can partly believe, for
19 heresies will always grow up, even in the true Church, for the trial of those who shall remain firm
20 in the orthodox belief. Then, in the next place, your mode of celebrating the Lord's Supper is, as I hear, very unlike that solemn and brotherly communion of an affecting religious rite which such an
21 occasion requires. So far from an equal and temperate distribution of the holy elements, I understand your custom to be, that each man has his own separate and exclusive meal, each variously apportioned, so that whilst one person from lack of means has little or nothing, another is surfeiting himself with intemperance. Is this doing it, as our Redeemer commanded us, in remembrance of him,
22 and after his model? If you must have your exclusive banquets, have you not your own houses for such purposes? or do you despise the sanctity of the Church of God, and wish to make a public display of your own luxurious living for the purpose of mortifying your poorer neighbours? What ought I to say and think of this conduct of yours? to
23 commend it is impossible. Remember the time, the occasion, and the purpose of the first institution of that solemn rite, which I have faithfully taught you on a former occasion, as I received it from the communication of Christ himself. I restate it, in order to impress it yet more forcibly upon your

memories. It was as follows. "Our Lord Jesus, on the night in which he was betrayed, took bread, and, having given thanks, he brake it, and said, 24
Take, eat, this is my body which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same 25
manner also he took the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood, this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." In eating this bread then, and in drinking this cup, 26
you are solemnly commemorating our Lord's death until his second coming; wherefore, he who eats of 27
that bread and drinks of that cup in such unseemly and unworthy manner is profaning no less a thing than the body and blood of our Lord himself, and incurring all the guilt of such profanation. Let a 28
man then search into his own thoughts, and put them into a befitting train for so solemn an occasion, and then, and not sooner, let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he who eats and 29
drinks in your thoughtless and unbecoming manner, eats and drinks what will operate upon him rather as a curse than as a blessing, inasmuch as he recollects not that it is our Lord's body which he is thus making subservient to his own intemperance. And 30
hence it is, that by God's just judgments, many of you are weak, and sickly, and some have been cut off in their sins. For, would we but judge ourselves, 31
we should escape the judgments of God; who now 32
judges us for these and our other sins in this life, in order that taking warning ere it be too late, we may

escape that final condemnation which shall befall
33 the mere children of this world. Wherefore, my
brethren, when for the future you assemble to eat
on this occasion, let it be in one common and tem-
34 perate meal; and if a man must eat to satisfy his
hunger, let him eat for that purpose in his own
home, that he may escape sin and condemnation [r].

[r] The strangely indecorous mode of celebrating the Lord's Supper here described conveys a far from gratifying impression of the spiritual advancement of that infant Church which St. Paul is addressing in this Epistle. The Apostle's temperate, dignified, and truly pious remonstrance affords indeed a noble contrast when placed in apposition with that delineation of coarse and selfish feeling which calls it forth. Still however we cannot but observe, that, although his whole cast of sentiment, whilst describing those awful impressions with which it is every Christian's duty to approach the Lord's table, is solemn and reverential in the highest degree, still no single expression escapes from him which can with any probability be adduced in support of the doctrine of transubstantiation as taught by the Romish Church. If we consider him as intending merely to inculcate the necessity of purified and devotional feelings for a due participation in the most affecting rite of our religion, his language is highly just and apposite; but it falls far short of what might be expected from him were it his object to assert the actual divinity of the consecrated elements. Once admitting this portentous dogma, the papal Ritual is undoubtedly justified and consistent in all its subsequent inferences from such premises. If indeed the bread and wine of the holy communion be really transmuted into the very body and blood of Christ, then un-

My other regulations on the subject of your religious meetings I will announce when I arrive amongst you.

doubtedly they have a claim to the direct adoration of all believers, and that minute attention to prevent the loss or escape of any one particle of them, with the denial of the cup to the laity on the same principle of reverential precaution, and all those other regulations which Protestants denounce as superstitious and unscriptural, are in fact most just and expedient. But the total silence of St. Paul is an unanswerable refutation of these superadditions of human speculation upon the simplicity of the truth as it is revealed in Scripture. He is too acute a reasoner not to perceive all the consequences necessarily resulting from such a doctrine had he really assented to it, and therefore the fact that he makes no allusion whatever to them can admit of only one explanation.

It may here by the way be worth observing, that one of the most atrocious calumnies advanced against the early Christians by their pagan persecutors, namely, that of devouring at their religious feasts *human flesh concealed under a sprinkling of wheaten flour*, was probably nothing more than a mistake arising from a literal acceptation of the figurative language of Scripture on the subject of the blessed Eucharist. "Infans farre contectus ut decipiat incautos apponitur ei qui sacris imbuatur. Is infans a tirunculo farris superficie quasi ad innoxios ictus provocato cæcis occultisque vulneribus occiditur: hujus, proh nefas, sitienter sanguinem lambunt; hujus certatim membra dispertiunt, hâc fœderantur hostiâ, hâc conscientiâ sceleris ad silentium mutuum pignerantur." *Minucii Felicis Octavius*, cap. 9.

ON THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

12 You ask me, in the next place, "by what certain
sign you shall be able to know whether you have
received the gift of the Holy Spirit?" I answer, by
the plain and simple fact of "your conversion from
2 sin to righteousness." You know that you were
formerly heathens, led away by your own fancies to
the worship of dumb and senseless idols, but have
subsequently abjured your errors, and embraced the
3 doctrine of redemption. Now, as it is evident that
no one speaking under the influence of the Holy
Spirit can pronounce our blessed Saviour to be
accursed; so we know from his own express assur-
ance to Peter, (Matt. xvi. 17.) that no one can pro-
nounce him to be the Lord and Christ, but by the
4 aid of the Holy Spirit. It is true, that the opera-
tions of the Holy Spirit are variously exhibited in
different persons, still however it is one and the
same Spirit which under this diversity of appear-
5 ance operates in them all. Thus men have different
functions entrusted to them, and for the discharge
of which they are accountable, but it is the same
6 God which distributes to each man his task: va-
rious powers and capacities are communicated to
each, but it is one and the same God from whom
7 they are derived. Now the gifts which descend to
us from the operation of the Holy Spirit are dealt
out to us individually in that form and that degree,
which is best suited to enable each of us to perform

effectually our respective duties. To one man, for 8
instance, is given the communication of a wise and
powerful understanding; to another, a ready appre-
hension of the various parts of learning; yet it is
the same Spirit who confers them both: to another 9
again is given a submiss and firm confidence in the
doctrines of revelation; to another, the gift of heal-
ing diseases; but still again it is the same Spirit
which manifests itself under these distinct appear-
ances: to another again is given the power of work- 10
ing general miracles; to another, skill in the inter-
pretation of Scripture; to another, the power of
distinguishing between the real operations of the
Spirit, and those which may be the result of impos-
ture, or of an excited imagination; to another is
given a ready fluency in languages; to another, the
faculty of interpreting languages for the instruction
of the unlearned; yet all this variety of faculties is 11
nothing more than the inworkings of one and the
same Spirit, distributing to each individual accord-
ing to its own good pleasure. For as the human 12
body is one single being, yet consists of many dis-
tinct members, the aggregate of those several mem-
bers constituting by their union only one individual
person; so is the mystical body of Christ, of which
we all of us are respectively members. For by one 13
and the same Spirit we have all been baptized and
united together in one common body, whether we
were Jews or Gentiles, slaves or freemen; and have
all drunk of and participated in the gifts of the one

14 Holy Spirit. Now then, to follow up the illustration afforded by this remark, namely, that our bodies derive their single individual character from the harmonious agreement of the various limbs, each
15 separately performing their due functions;—let us suppose that the foot were to say, "Because I am not the hand, therefore I am not part of the body;"
16 would that assertion be correct? or suppose that the ear were to say, "Because I am not the eye, therefore I am not part of the body;" would that
17 assertion again be correct? for if the eye constituted the whole body, where would be the faculty of hearing? or if the hearing constituted the whole
18 body, where would be the faculty of smelling? The fact is, that God has in his wisdom allotted the various portions of the body each for its respective use, yet so as to form by their combination the
19 whole man:—whereas if any one separate member were to be the whole body, where would be that harmony and proportion of parts of which we know
20 it to consist? As it is, however, being one aggregate nature, consisting of the union and combina-
21 tion of distinct parts, the eye cannot say contemptuously to the hand, "I have no need of you:" nor can the head say to the feet, "I have no need
22 of you." Even the most subordinate and unimportant parts of our bodies, we know, have all their
23 separate and positive use; and even those which are deemed the least honourable, we notwithstanding clothe with more costly attire than many others

which we expose to observation; and thus God has 24
wisely contrived that each several portion of our
animal nature should have its due share of our care
and attention, making up to them in one respect
what is deficient in another: so that there should 25
be no actual preference or preponderance of one
part over another: and thus it is, that if one limb 26
is in pain, the whole body suffers with it; or if one
be indulged, the whole body is conscious of the
comfort;—now, as it is with the human body, so is 27
it with the mystical body of Christ, which is one in
its individuality, yet composed of as many distinct
members as there are believers in the community of
the Church: God has accordingly apportioned to 28
each their respective offices, making some of us
apostles, others expounders of Scripture, others
teachers, others workers of miracles, others healers of
the sick, others helpers, others Church rulers, others
speakers of various languages. But, as I said be- 29
fore, one member is not to claim the functions appro-
priated to another, and consequently not every man
is to expect to become an apostle, nor every man
an expounder of Scripture, nor every man a teacher,
nor every man a worker of miracles, nor every man 30
a healer of the sick, nor every man a speaker in
various languages, nor every man an interpreter of
languages to others. Of all these various gifts of 31
the Holy Spirit then let every man aspire to that
which is best and most excellent;—and shall I tell
you what, after all, that "best and most excellent"

13 is? It is not the gift of languages, but something far
better: for be assured that, even if I have ability in
all the languages of men and of angels themselves, and
yet am without Christian love and kindness, I am
after all but as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.
2 Again, it is not the mere interpretation of Scripture;
for I say again, though I had that, and the power of
solving all mysteries whatsoever, and all knowledge
however various;—nay, though I possessed faith,
such as, to use our * Saviour's expression, (Mark xi.

* I shall avail myself once for all of this incidental allusion to our Saviour's own expression as recorded in the Gospels, (Matt. xxi. 21. Mark xi. 23.) to direct the reader's attention to the many apparent citations from the works of the four Evangelists which occur in various parts of the apostolical Epistles: a circumstance which we can account for only by supposing, either that the Gospels were then extant in the form in which they have been transmitted to us, or that the writers of the Epistles derived their information from the same common source with those who subsequently undertook to record the events of our Redeemer's history. Mr. Toland early in the last century, and other infidel writers within the last few years, have attempted to derogate from the authority of the four Gospels by ostentatiously bringing forward the apocryphal writings of the early ages of Christianity as of equal authenticity with those which the uniform consent of the various Christian Churches has admitted into the sacred Canon. But the numerous citations now referred to, and which no reader will find any difficulty in selecting for himself, appear, even if other and irrefragable proofs were wanting,

23.) "would remove mountains," yet am wanting in Christian love and kindness,—I am nothing. It is not, again, merely what the world calls charity; 3 for even though I expend my whole substance in feeding the poor, or give up my very body to be burned, yet, if I am wanting in Christian love and kindness, my good deeds are of no avail. What 4 then is this love and kindness which I am now recommending as the most excellent of all the gifts of the Spirit? It is that state of mind which is slow to anger, whilst it regards the conduct of others with charity and kindness. It is that which envies not its neighbour, boasts not of itself; shuns pride; and arrogance; prefers another's benefit to its own; 5 gives way to no impetuosity of temper; imputes no evil intentions to others; takes no pleasure in 6 injustice; but delights in and sympathizes with whatever is true and holy; conceals to the best 7 of its power the failings of its neighbour; hopes and deems of every one for the best; and bears meekly with the waywardness of mankind, and the trials and calamities of life. This is the frame 8

almost decisive of the question. It is scarcely an exaggeration to assert, that from the apostolical Epistles and the Book of the Acts of the Apostles a tolerably accurate notion of the contents of the four Gospels might be derived, even if by some unfortunate accident those last-mentioned books should one day be lost to mankind.

of mind; this the best gift of the Spirit, which shall survive death itself. As for the wisdom which we so ambitiously seek after, it shall cease and be forgotten; our gifts of language shall be silenced, our knowledge shall pass away as though it had never
9 been: for our knowledge in this world is but a slight and imperfect surmise; our wisdom but a vague and partial apprehension of mysteries beyond the reach of our present limited faculties to explain.
10 But when the fulness of God's dispensations shall be made clear to us, as it will be, then these inferior
11 acquirements will be no longer wanted by us, as the mistaken guesses of the child disappear and are discarded before the full apprehension and percep-
12 tions of manhood. For in this life we see not truth itself, but its imperfect reflection only: but in that which is to come we shall be admitted to contemplate it face to face; now we make partial surmises; then I shall apprehend God, as I am
13 now apprehended by Him. Meanwhile, during the course of our present mortal career, faith, hope, and Christian love form the three great excellencies of that Christian character to which we aspire; but the two former are calculated for this world's necessities only; *the latter will accompany us to the next, and will last for ever* [t].

[t] It is consolatory to us, who live in a period in which the extraordinary dispensations of the Holy Spirit are no longer communicated, to observe how St. Paul, who was himself

Having secured to the best of your power this 14
most excellent and foremost of all the gifts of God's Holy Spirit, then in the next place aspire after the others; and, as it is your duty to prefer that which is really profitable to that which may be merely osten-

rich in those mysterious treasures, directly asserts the far superior value of the practical Christian virtues to the more ostentatious gifts of miracles and languages. This consideration ought to operate with us as a satisfactory vindication of the impartiality of God's providence in his dealings with the human race. Miracles were wanted for the first establishment of Christianity, and they were allowed to be performed; the necessity for them no longer existed when the infancy of the Church was passed, and they were finally withdrawn. But that single-minded, pure, and exalted affection to God and man, which is the consummation of the Christian character, and without which even faith itself were valueless, is a no less necessary acquisition now than in the apostolical age; and, being such, is, as we are expressly assured by Scripture, no less attainable by every sincere disciple of our Lord at this moment than it was to the primitive believers themselves. If then the possession of this pearl of price could have consoled St. Paul for the loss of all his other treasures, surely we can have no reason to feel differently, or to sigh in fruitless regret after the acquisition of those other powers, which, however more gratifying to our carnal vanity, could scarcely have been possessed by us without risk, as affording aliment to spiritual conceit, and tending to excite unworthy and invidious emulations among the common servants of Christ.

tatious, pray rather for the gift of duly understanding and interpreting the holy Scriptures, than for those more extraordinary acquirements which are
2 dispensed only to a few. For after all—the gift of languages which so many ambitiously seek after—what is it? He who possesses that gift speaks not to the apprehension of the Church in general, who cannot follow him, but to God only: his knowledge indeed is from the Spirit, but it is dark and unpro-
3 fitable to others. The able expounder of Scripture, on the contrary, addresses to the assembled Church the words of edification, and exhortation, and com-
4 fort. He who possesses the gift of languages speaks in them for his own profit only: he, on the other hand, who expounds the Scriptures, makes his
5 knowledge useful for the instruction of others. I wish indeed that you all possessed the gift of languages, but I wish much more that you possessed the gift of the interpretation of Scripture: for the expounder of Scripture is far more serviceable to the Church in the exercise of his peculiar gift than the mere speaker of unknown languages, unless indeed the words of the latter be interpreted into the vernacular language of the country, in order that the whole assembly be able to derive instruction
6 from them: and even when interpreted, what is the value of my gift of languages, unless the words which I may utter shall be available for the revelation of God's will, or for imparting wisdom, or for the exposition of Scripture, or for general instruc-

tion? Just as is the case with common musical 7
instruments, the pipe, for instance, or the harp;
unless we produce upon them some definite and well
modulated sound, no idea is excited in the minds of
the hearers. Thus if the trumpet when sounded 8
produce no peculiar and decided note, who will
understand it as the signal for battle, and make his
preparations accordingly? So you, if in your 9
Churches you utter what is unintelligible to the
minds of the assembled congregation, how will they
be the better for your knowledge? not more so,
than if you were speaking to the air. There is, as 10
we know, a vast variety of languages in the world,
all of them understood by the nations respectively
speaking them: yet if I know not the language 11
of the country in which I converse, I am unintelligi-
ble to the natives, and they to me. Wherefore, my 12
brethren, as you express an anxiety to possess the
gifts of the Holy Spirit, pray especially that you may
abound in such as may tend, not to the indulgence of
your own gratification, but to the practical advantage
of the Church: and let him who speaks in an un- 13
known tongue pray that he may have the gift of
interpretation also. For if I pray [u] in an unknown 14
tongue, my own spirit is indeed occupied in prayer,
but the understanding of those who might wish to

[u] How would the Church of Rome reconcile its practice of prayer in an unknown tongue with this injunction of the apostle?

15 join with me is unedified. Let us then strive to pray in the spirit, and to pray to the understanding of our hearers also: let us sing our hymns in the spirit, but let us also sing to the apprehension of 16 others. For if otherwise, when you invoke God's blessing upon the congregation of believers, how shall each private individual join in the supplication, and pronounce the "Amen" from his heart, if he has been unable to follow the meaning of your 17 words? Your benediction may be properly conceived with reference to your own understanding, but the rest of the congregation is not benefited. 18 Think not that I speak thus from a wish to depreciate the gift of languages. The fact is, and I thank God for it, I myself speak more languages 19 than you all. And yet, whilst officiating in the Church, I had rather speak five words to the apprehension of my hearers, so as to communicate real knowledge to them, than ten thousand in a 20 language which they do not understand. Do not, my brethren, indulge in this childish display of unprofitable acquirements: be as children in a guileless disposition, and in simplicity of heart, but be men in that strength of mind which delights in the pursuit of true, and not merely ostentatious, wisdom. 21 Remember what is written in the prophet Isaiah, (Isaiah xxviii. 11.) "I will speak to this people with the miracle of various languages, and foreign speech, and yet not even for all that will they 22 hearken unto me, saith the Lord." From which we

are taught to infer, that the gift of languages was imparted as a miraculous[x] sign to convince unbelievers, and not for the daily intercourse of believers. The gift of interpretation of Scripture, on the contrary, is lost upon unbelievers, who assent not to the truth of those Scriptures, but is of hourly value to us who look to them for the means of our salvation. If then, when your Church is assembled 23
for the purpose of common edification and prayer, all of you, instead of doing that which is most profitable for you all, indulge only in the wretched vanity of displaying your knowledge of various languages, and any indifferent person, or heathen, chance to step in, will they not say that you are mad? If, on the other hand, when you are so as- 24
sembled, all who are competent to the task be occupied to their utmost in expounding the doctrines of revelation to the other brethren, a stranger or an heathen accidentally stepping in may not improbably be roused to the conviction of his own state, and taught to regard his soul's health: and 25
thus perhaps may the awakened feelings of his heart find a vent, and he falling prostrate be in-

[x] This assertion of St. Paul affords a satisfactory explanation of that arrangement of Providence by which the miraculous gift of languages was confined to the early ages of the Church, when the cause of revelation stood in more urgent need of these extraordinary aids than it can be said to do at present.

duced to join in prayer to the true God, and may go away with the conviction that that God is as-
26 suredly amongst you. But is it so, my brethren, in your assemblies? On the contrary, I understand them to be too often a mere display of ostentatious rivalry; and that one man has his psalm, another his discourse, another his display of languages, another his revelation of some mystery, another his interpretation. Let then, for the future, all that you do be for the great object of common edification. And for this purpose, and for the preservation of order and decorum in your churches, adopt the following regulations.

27 If any man wish to speak in a foreign language, let him utter one, two, or at most three, sentences at a time; and then pause, until what he has spoken shall have been interpreted to the rest [y].

[y] The apostle appears to have adopted this regulation from the established mode of reading the books of the Old Testament in the Jewish synagogues. "After the Hebrew language had ceased to be the mother tongue of the Jews," says Dean Prideaux, "and the Chaldee grew up into use among them instead of it, (as was the case after their return from the Babylonish captivity,) their usage was, that, in the public reading of the Law to the people, it was read to them first in the original Hebrew, and after that rendered by an interpreter into the Chaldee language, that so all might fully understand the same. And this was done period by period. And therefore that these periods might be the better distinguished, and the

If there be no person in the Church competent 28
to interpret for him to the congregation, then let
him remain silent, and offer his prayers quietly to
himself.

Let the expounders of Scripture utter two or 29
three sentences only at a time, and then make a
short pause, until the congregation shall have duly
apprehended what they have said.

If, whilst one is speaking, any revelation occur 30
to another, let the first remain silent, in order to
afford his neighbour an opportunity of uttering it.
For, by restricting yourselves to the rule of one only 31
speaking at the same moment, the whole congrega-
tion will receive instruction, and derive the greatest
spiritual profit. And it is right that each ex- 32
pounder of Scripture should be willing in his turn
to listen to, and improve himself by, the exposition
of others: for God is not the author of confusion, 33

reader more certainly know how much to read at every interval, and the interpreter how much to interpret at every interval, there was a necessity that some marks should be invented for their direction herein. The rule given in their ancient books is, that in the Law the reader was to read one verse, and then the interpreter was to render the same into the Chaldee; but that in the Prophets the reader was to read three verses together, and then the interpreter to render the same three verses into Chaldee in the same manner." *Connection of the History of the Old and New Testament*, part i. book 5.

but of peace and harmony in the churches of his saints.

34 Let not the women attempt to speak in public in your churches: for the reserve of their sex makes such a display of themselves unsuitable and
35 inexpedient. Accordingly if they even wish only to speak so much as to ask questions for their own better information, let them reserve those questions till they return home, and are able to consult their husbands, but let them not take any part in the conversations in the Church.

36 By observing these regulations, you will not only keep order in your public meetings, but will check that undue vanity which is at present causing so much confusion, as well as leading to the display of so much spiritual presumption, amongst you. For do not imagine, as you appear to do, that the knowledge of the true God came first to us from you, and that you are the only persons with whom
37 it rests at this moment. On the contrary, if you will flatter yourselves with your supposed spiritual attainments, and knowledge of Christian truth, shew them at least by admitting that the admoni-
38 tions which I now give you are from Christ. If any man choose to deny that they are so, I shall not attempt to convince him to the contrary.

39 Once more then, I repeat, keep up at all events in your public assemblies the habit of interpretation of Scripture as a necessary part of the divine service; and with regard to the use of foreign

languages, let it have its turn also,—but with moderation. Meanwhile, let every thing be done de- 40
cently, and in order.

ON THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY.

Thus much then for the external discipline and 15
regulation of your Church; and now before I conclude this Epistle, let me advert to the great doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, which I understand that some teachers amongst you have ventured to call into question. Now this is the sum and substance of that great Gospel truth which I taught amongst you, and to which you have made your profession as an article of faith; and which 2
will be the means of the salvation of your souls, if you accept it, not as a merely vague impression, but with the solemn conviction which I have attempted to inculcate in your minds. The founda- 3
tion of this our hope is the certainty which we possess of the resurrection of Christ himself. For I have already taught to you, my brethren, that which I had before received as an undoubted truth, that Christ died for our sins accordingly as had been foretold respecting him by the prophet Isaiah, (Isaiah liii. 5.) and that he was buried, and that he 4
was raised again from the grave on the third day, as the Scriptures had also foretold of him. And that he was seen after his resurrection by Peter, and afterwards by the other apostles; and on 5
subsequent occasion was seen by more than fiv

hundred of the brethren at once, the greater part of whom are at this moment living to vouch for the
7 fact, though some few are dead. [s] On another occa-
sion he was seen by James, and then again by all
8 the apostles, and last of all he was seen by myself,
9 an apostle born out of due time, the least amongst the apostles, and who do not deserve so proud an appellation, because I persecuted the Church of God.
10 Still, by the grace of God, I am what I am. And the mercy and grace which he has bestowed upon me has not, I trust, been wasted; but I have laboured in his service more than all the others; or rather, let me say, it was not I that laboured, but
11 God's grace that was with me. Be their labours, however, or be my own, what they may, such at all events is the doctrine which we all teach, and to which you have professed your belief.

12 If then it be true (and with such evidence who can doubt its truth?) that Christ really rose from the dead, how is it that some of your teachers have as-
13 serted that there is no resurrection of the dead? If there is no resurrection of the dead, then assuredly
14 Christ himself is not risen; and, if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching unprofitable, and your
15 faith equally unprofitable: nay, we, the apostles, stand convicted of having borne false testimony re-

[s] These two appearances of Christ subsequent to his ascension are not mentioned in any other part of Scripture.

specting God; for we have in that case asserted of God, against the real fact, that he raised Christ from the dead; which cannot be true if the dead rise not: for if there be no resurrection of the dead, 16
Christ himself, as I just now observed, is not risen; and if Christ be not risen, then your faith is a mere 17
delusion, and you are all of you still involved in your sins, without a hope of expiation; and then 18
also have all those who have died in the faith of Christ perished likewise in their sins. Most assur- 19
edly, if it is in this life only that we are to look for the reward of our faith in Christ, we Christians are of all men the most miserable. But not such is the 20
termination of our hopes. Christ, we know, *is* risen from the dead, the first fruit to God of those who lie in the grave, and the pledge of their resurrection. For as by one man death came upon mankind, so 21
by one man came also the resurrection of the dead; and as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all 22
be made alive. But that end of all things is not 23
yet. Each must wait to receive his reward in that order which God has appointed. Christ was the first fruits of the grave: and next after him shall be raised Christ's own flock at his second coming: and after that shall be that final consummation when 24
he shall give up the kingdom to God the Father, and finally extirpate every other supremacy, and authority, and power. For he, our blessed Re- 25
deemer, shall reign, as we are assured by the Psalmist, (Psalm viii.) "until God hath put all enemies

26 under his feet." The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death; but even death shall be destroyed
27 in its turn, otherwise that promise, that "*all things shall be put under his feet*," would lose its completion. In saying however that "God shall put *all things* under his feet," it is of course evident, that God the Father himself is not intended to be included in that expression, as He it is who puts all
28 things under him. But when all things whatever shall have been put under him, then in his turn the Son himself shall be subject to God the Father, that God may be all things, and over all things.
29 Why, let me ask, are we baptized into that faith which our forefathers looked to as the greatest of blessings, yet died without receiving, if the dead rise not again? Why continue we thus to chase a
30 mere delusion? why thus to submit to persecution
31 and tribulation hourly, yet without an object? I protest, by those hopes which I have in Jesus Christ our Lord, my daily afflictions which I suffer for the sake of the Gospel are equal in their agony to death
32 itself. Why did I, for what purpose, or in hope of what compensation, undergo so many fearful afflictions and dangers from the enraged populace at Ephesus, if my hopes are to terminate in this life, and the dead rise not?—If so, let us throw ourselves at once into the frivolity and dissipation of the children of this world, and eat, and drink, and
33 revel to-day, because we die to-morrow! No, my brethren, such is the debasing and brutalizing so-

phistry suggested by the licentious and dissipated, but be you not deceived nor seduced by them.—I 34
call upon you, on the contrary, to rouse yourselves from any such dreams of sensuality and intemperance, and to sin not:—and I call upon you the more earnestly, because I am aware that some of you (I blush for you whilst I say it) are yet ignorant of God, and of the holy faith which you profess.

But some of you argue, as I am informed, of the 35
impossibility of a future resurrection. How can the bodies which have been wasted in the flames, which have mingled with the winds, or mouldered in the grave, be restored each to their original particles, and live again? Wretched reasoners! look at the 36
very seeds which you cast into the ground, and you will find that the substance of the seed undergoes its own peculiar decomposition ere it can vegetate afresh: nor is the seed [n] which you sow the same 37

[n] This objection derived from the supposed impossibility of the reassemblage of all the component materials of the human frame at the day of judgment, which supplied an argument to the early heretics for impugning the great doctrine of the resurrection, though completely refuted by St. Paul, has nevertheless by some strange perversity afforded matter of discussion and perplexity to speculative theologians of all ages, and even within our own times. How, it has been asked, can all the various particles which once constituted a human body, but which are now dispersed among the elements, or perhaps actually forming

with the vigorous plant which rises from it, but a mere grain of whatever plant it may chance to be,

part of the material substance of other persons, be so completely restored to their original locality, that each individual shall receive back the same identical atoms moulded afresh into the same identical limbs? The satisfactory solution of this difficulty is that given by the apostle, which, it may be worth observing, precisely accords with what the experiments of philosophers in more recent times would lead us to infer. It is now, I believe, universally admitted, that what is called the personal identity of sentient beings has nothing whatever to do with the substantial identity of their bodily organs. A human individual grows up from infancy to manhood, and from manhood to old age, during which period the whole substance of his limbs is changed again and again; yet his own recollections and internal consciousness tell him to the last that he is the same person who thought and acted fourscore years ago:—limbs are amputated, yet the sensations which appeared to belong to them remain as matter of consciousness to the person so maimed: these facts seem to establish the conclusion, that our bodies are rather the vehicles of sensation than that they are themselves sentient; that they are instruments through which the soul acts, but which might be superseded by the substitution of others of greater or less capacity, without at all infringing our consciousness of our own identity. It is evident, therefore, that the reannexation of the soul to the same or to different particles of matter at the final resurrection can have no more to do with its own continuous duration and individuality, than the existence of the eye can be said to depend upon the optical contrivances by which its functions are assisted, or

to which God in his due time gives its own just and 38
peculiar developement and figure. All flesh again 39
is not endowed with the same identical characters,
but there is one kind which belongs to men, an-
other to beasts, another to fishes, and another to
birds: there are also bodies celestial, and bodies 40
terrestrial; but the glory of the heavenly bodies is
one thing, the constitution of terrestrial bodies is
another. Again the splendour of the sun differs from 41
that of the moon, and the splendour of the moon
from that of the stars; the stars also themselves
have their various degrees of beauty and brilliance.
So, raised from death to life, so, changed in consti- 42
tution and character, will be man's body when God
shall create it afresh: it is sown in corruption; it
shall be raised in incorruption:—it is sown in dis- 43
honour; it shall be raised in glory:—it is sown in
weakness; it shall be raised in power:—it is sown 44

the personal identity of an artizan upon the peculiar implements by which he labours at his vocation. St. Paul's illustration of this mysterious question, therefore, is perfectly apposite. The grain of wheat is cast into the ground; the full and perfect stem, blade, and ear spring from it, all differing from the original seed in form, size, colour, and in their constituent material particles; yet the continuity of existence is never for a moment interrupted, but, whilst minute portions of the substance are successively withdrawn, the gradual substitution and assimilation of others build up the entire plant to the full developement of its growth.

a natural body; it shall be raised a spiritual body: for there is a natural body, and there is also a spiritual
45 body. As it is written in the book of Genesis, "the first man Adam was made a sentient being:" the last Adam, on the contrary, was made a spirit communi-
46 cating life to others: but it was not the spiritual man who came first, but the natural; and after-
47 wards, in God's good time, the spiritual. The first man was made of the dust of the earth, and accordingly returned to it: the second man is the Lord
48 from heaven. As was our earthly forefather Adam, so are we his earthly descendants; and as is our heavenly Redeemer, such will his glorified children
49 one day become: and as we have borne the form and infirmities of the earthly, we shall also bear the
50 glorious image of the heavenly. Let me not then, my brethren, be supposed to assert, that mere mortal flesh and blood can inherit the kingdom of heaven, or that our present wretched and corrup-
51 tible bodies can inherit incorruption. Mark the wonderful and glorious dispensation which is prepared for us. All of us, the whole human race, they who shall be in their graves at Christ's second coming, and they who shall still be living upon the
52 earth, all shall undergo an instantaneous change, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and all of us shall
53 put on a new nature: for it is necessary that this our corruptible nature should put on incorruption, and these our mortal bodies should put on immor-

tality: and then, when this our corruptible frame 54
shall have put on incorruption, and these our mortal
bodies shall have put on immortality, then shall be
finally accomplished the declaration of the Prophet,
(Isaiah xxv. 8.) "Death is swallowed up in vic-
tory."—O death! where is now thy sting? O 55
grave! where is now thy victory? The sting of 56
death is sin; and that which gives strength and
efficacy to sin, is that law of moral righteousness
of which we have all of us fallen short: but thanks 57
be to God who gives us the victory, not through
our own merits, but through the expiation of our
Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore, my beloved bre- 58
thren, continue firm in your faith, unmoved by the
seductions of the world, and to the end of your
career abounding in the work of the Lord, resting
fully assured that your labour in the Lord's service
shall not remain for ever without its reward.

CONCLUSION.

With regard to the collection which I have re- 16
commended for the support of our distressed Chris-
tian brethren, I would advise you to follow the
directions which I have laid down for the Churches
in Galatia. That is, on the first day of every week 2
let each of you lay by something from his gains for
the establishment of a fund, in order that you may
not have to commence your contributions after my
arrival. And when I arrive, I will send such persons 3
to bear your liberality to Jerusalem as you shall

specially commission in writing: and, if you wish
5 it, I myself will accompany them in person. My
present intention is to come to you, after passing
6 through Macedon, which it is my object to visit, and
to stay some time with you, perhaps the whole win-
ter, in the hope of having some of you to accompany
7 me afterwards on some part of my journey. I do
not come to you sooner, as in that case I could only
see you in my way through your country; but defer
my visit until I shall have leisure, with God's
blessing, to make a longer stay than I could afford
8 at present. I shall therefore continue at Ephesus
9 till Pentecost, where a promising opportunity of
making converts seems to present itself, though I
10 expect much and violent opposition. If, meanwhile,
Timothy arrive among you, receive him well and
kindly; for he is engaged upon our Lord's business
11 as actively as myself. Let no man therefore think
slightingly of him, but send him on his way in
comfort, that he may reach me according to our
arrangement; for I expect him together with the
12 other brethren. With regard to our brother Apollos,
I strongly pressed him to come to you with the
others, but could not prevail upon him; but he will
come shortly, when he has an opportunity.

13 Be watchful and firm in the faith: acquit your-
14 selves like men: be strong; and do every thing,
one with another, in love and charity. Adieu.

15 I beseech you, brethren, (you know the family of
Stephanas, that they were our first converts in

Achaia, and are at present employed in rendering service to the Church,) submit yourselves to their 16
instruction, and to that of all my other fellow labourers in the Gospel. I am happy in the com- 17
pany of Stephanas and Fortunatus, whose presence is some consolation to me for my absence from you: for they have cheered me much, as they will 18
you upon their arrival. Receive them kindly. The 19
Churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla, with the other Christian brethren in their household salute you. All the brethren here salute you. 20
Salute one another with an holy kiss. My own 21
salutation, which I Paul write with my own hand, be with you. If any one among you love not the 22
Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema, Maran atha!

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. 23

My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. 24
Amen.

THE topics which form the subject of the foregoing Epistle, having reference chiefly to usages and opinions which the change of manners produced by the lapse of many centuries has long superseded, may at the first view appear to have lost much of their original interest; but the fact is, that the admirable tone of truly Christian feelings with which they are discussed, and the practical inferences which may be derived from them, are calculated

to instruct and improve mankind in all ages. The intention of a legislator is seldom so clearly perceived when put forth only in the shape of general rules and maxims, however accurately expressed, as when it is illustrated by its application to special cases, even though those cases may no longer form a part of modern manners: and it is this circumstance which attaches such immense value to the inspired composition now before us. Considered as a practical comment upon the abstract principles of the Gospel by its application to some of those unforeseen emergencies which the natural course of events must be expected to produce, it is calculated to supply an unerring rule, which no one who has imbibed the least portion of the Christian spirit can fail to apprehend, for the regulation of his conduct in every new position in which accident may place him. But to no one is it fitted to convey a more salutary lesson than to him who is occupied in treading in the apostle's footsteps in preaching the doctrines of the Gospel. To such a person the impression received from the study of this invaluable exhortation will be at once disheartening and consolatory. He will learn what discouragement, what resistance from the perversity of the human temper, what mortifications, what disappointments to expect; but he will learn also how to bear them without despair, if not without a murmur. He will learn at how early a period in the history of our faith the tares began to grow up together with the good seed; and, whilst contemplating the ambitious feuds of the Corinthian Church, their relaxed morality, the coldness of their zeal, and the worldliness of their views, will strive to endure with cheerfulness and hope the many vexations attending his own ministry, from the recollection of those which even an inspired apostle, the eloquent, the meek, the energetic Paul himself, could not entirely escape. If in that infant period of the

Church, when the great truths of Christianity had not yet lost their primitive freshness, and when the cogent arguments of Christ's immediate messenger were enforced by the operation of miracles, even then the spiritual parent had to mourn over the ingratitude of his children;—surely the modern uninspired Christian teacher will find little cause for wonder, that the utility of his spiritual labours is often checked by the hostility of the profane, or the misconstructions of the speculative and falsely ingenious. But still the same great example of his heaven-taught precursor will call upon him to persevere; and whether his way shall lie amid friends or assailants, he will like him unhesitatingly pursue it, without deviating, through deference to human prejudices, to the right hand or to the left; and like him exclaim to the last, "Woe unto me if I preach not the Gospel."

THE

SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL

TO THE

CORINTHIANS.

The second Epistle to the Corinthians was written, as is evident from the context, at a short period, probably within a few months, after the date of the preceding. The commonly received opinion is that it was composed at Philippi in the year of our Lord 58.

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

1 PAUL an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the Church of God which is in Corinth, together with all the 2 Christian brethren who are in Achaia; grace and peace be unto you from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ.

SECTION I.

The second Epistle to the Corinthians, like the preceding one addressed to the same community, divides itself under two heads, the former of which, comprehending the first nine chapters, consists of St. Paul's reply to the exculpatory statement of the Corinthian Church produced by his late remonstrance upon their past conduct, together with a dignified exposition of the high importance of his apostolical commission, and an eloquent vindication of the course pursued by him in the execution of that arduous office: whilst in the latter he reprobates with considerable but just severity the persevering ingratitude and turbulent conduct of some false teachers who were continuing to foment ill will, and to sow the seeds of pernicious heresies in that society.

In no part of the New Testament perhaps is the personal character of the writer more graphically drawn out than in the vivid and energetic display of kind and noble feeling conveyed in this interesting composition, in which we have the portraiture of a warmly affectionate mind, painfully anxious lest in the discharge of an imperious duty, more pain should have been inflicted upon the offending party than the circumstances actually required;—yet at the same time accompanied with that inflexible decision of principle, which feels that the indulgence of the gentler inclinations of our nature is not to be purchased by an indifference to the paramount claims of duty and of man's eternal welfare. Accordingly, if in the former part of

this Epistle we have the beautiful and affecting picture of an humble Christian teacher burning with holy love toward God, and charity to mankind; cheerful amid persecutions, and humbly looking forward to that period when he, with those entrusted to his ministry, shall exchange their present afflictions and infirmities for a blissful immortality; we see, in the concluding portion, that same person undauntedly asserting the discipline of his office, and establishing, unwillingly indeed, but peremptorily, and with a becoming confidence, his own personal claims to their obedience and respect.

The self-denying principles of Christianity have been accused by its adversaries as having a tendency to subdue the more energetic faculties of the soul, and thus to derogate from the dignity of human nature: but of this charge the character of St. Paul as it stands forth in the following Epistle affords a decisive refutation. The annals of heroism contain not a more striking specimen of a mind operated upon by ardent impulses, or endued with more persevering hardihood of moral courage; yet the sternness here pourtrayed is the sternness of a Christian saint, compatible with the most fervent kindness, the most disinterested benevolence, the most amiable gentleness of manners, and the most guileless simplicity of heart. And if accordingly we find the Apostle at length roused by the unworthy taunts of his opposers into a tone of self-commendation, still it is such as necessarily results from the inevitable consciousness of the possession of high gifts; whilst it is stripped of the last remnant of human vanity by the avowal of accompanying infirmity, and by the humbling admission that, however transcendent, they are after all nothing more than an awful deposit intrusted to his charge, for the use or abuse of which a strict account must be one day rendered to their Almighty Giver.

Blessed be our God, and the Father of our Lord 3
Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of
all consolation, who comforts us in all our tribula- 4
tion, so that we may in our turn comfort our
brethren in their manifold affliction, by that same
comfort which we have received as our own conso-
lation from God. For as we are called to partici- 5

pate in the afflictions of Christ our Saviour, so does
the divine support also which we have through him
6 abound in us; recollecting that if we do suffer tri-
bulation, it is for your comfort and salvation, the
working out of which is forwarded by your patience
under the same class of trials by which we ourselves
are afflicted:—and that, if we are strengthened by
that support which is from above, it is also for your
encouragement, and the forwarding of your eternal
7 welfare. Our confidence therefore in your perse-
verance in the faith is unshaken, knowing, as we
do, that, as you are joint partakers in our sorrows,
so you share also in the same divine consolation
8 with ourselves. My brethren, I do not wish to
conceal from you, the persecutions which we have
recently experienced in Asia, which have pressed
most fearfully upon us, even beyond our strength
to endure, and to the imminent peril of our lives;
9 but we were allowed by God's providence to fall
into this danger and total helplessness in our own
resources, in order that feeling our own weakness
we might learn more implicitly to repose our trust
upon his protecting aid, who is able to raise the
10 dead to life; and who has rescued us from this
grievous peril of our lives, and even now holds his
guardian arm over us; as we are humbly assured
he will still continue to do during the remainder of
11 our course. And do you, my brethren, meanwhile
aid us with your prayers before the throne of grace,
that having brought down mercy and support upon

us by your common petitions, you may with one voice return God thanks for the protection afforded by Him to us, through your intercession.

It is indeed, my brethren, no small cause of 12
exultation in these my tribulations, that looking into my own breast I can confidently assert that the whole course of my converse with mankind, and more especially during my apostleship to yourselves, has been in the pure and simple spirit of the Christian faith, not compromising my doctrine in order to make it assimilate with the speculations of earthly wisdom, but preaching the merciful dispensations of God, as displayed through Christ; and that only. Accordingly, nothing which you will find in these 13
my Epistles, will be in any degree at variance with those great truths which you have already read and apprehended, and in the due apprehension of which you will, I trust, continue to the latest moment of your lives: a hope which I the more confidently 14
entertain, from having occasionally heard that you boast of the advantages which you have received from my ministry; as I hope hereafter to make my boast of you, when I produce you to my blessed Saviour on the great day of judgment as the glorious fruit of my spiritual labours upon the earth.

It was under this earnest anxiety for your welfare 15
that I proposed some time ago to pay you a double visit, one in my way to Macedon, and another on 16
my return from thence, in order that you might

have a second opportunity of profiting by my instructions, hoping that afterwards you might be induced to accompany me on some part of my
17 journey towards Judea. Now do not imagine that in having abandoned this intention I have acted from fickleness or caprice; or that from any selfish motive I determine upon one day what I abandon
18 on the following. I am not, as God who knows my heart can bear witness, a person who can change his "yes" into "no," or "no" into "yes," without due
19 consideration and sufficient cause. The holy doctrine which I, as well as Silvanus and Timothy, have taught among you, was not, as your own recollection will testify, of this light and unsteady character,
20 but one and the same consistent whole; what I affirmed from the first respecting God's promises being affirmed by me to the last, my uniform and single object being the establishment of his veracity,
21 and the furtherance of his glory. And God has borne testimony to my ministry by confirming us in one common faith in Christ, and giving us the unction
22 of his Holy Spirit, sealing us as his own peculiar property, and pouring the pledge of his love, his
23 divine grace, into our hearts. My real motive for my not coming at the time I proposed (and I appeal to God, as my soul shall answer it, for the truth of this assertion,) was that I might spare your feelings after the chiding tone in which I have been com-
24 pelled to write to you. For I do not wish to appear to exercise my authority over you more harshly

than my duty requires, but rather to be considered as a fellow labourer with you for the attainment of that joy which is the result of a stedfast faith in God's promises; for it is by faith alone that we stand firm in this our present state of trial. Now 2
my anxious wish was that I should not take another journey to you at a moment when, after what had recently passed between us, a meeting could not be otherwise than painful; for if I afflict you unneces- 2
sarily, how can I look to you in my own afflictions for that consolation which I have been the cause of your wanting for yourselves. I thought it there- 3
fore more expedient to put my censures and remonstrances upon paper and forward them to you, rather than to come to you at that moment in person, that I might not diminish the joy of my visit, whenever it shall take place, by mixing up with it the exercise of a necessary, though truly unpleasant, duty: being fully assured, that of all my well wishers there are none who more cordially participate in my joys, whenever I can procure them thus pure and unmixed, than yourselves. And 4
it was accordingly with sincere agony and anguish of heart, and with a profusion of tears, that I addressed to you in my former Epistle the severe admonition which you have received; and which so far from being suggested by any bitter feeling on my part, was in reality but the result of the anxious desire which, as you know, I entertain for your welfare.

5 With regard to the person[a] then whose conduct provoked from me this strong and severe remonstrance, give him to understand that the pain which he caused to me was not so much upon my own account as upon yours, as it obliged me in some degree to extend my censure from him to some of
6 yourselves. As however he has shewn a proper contrition and submission to the wholesome discipline of the Church, let the punishment which has already been inflicted be considered sufficient for
7 what has taken place; and now accordingly, that he may not be borne down with deeper compunction than may be requisite for the purpose of reforma-
8 tion, let it be your endeavour to shew to him such returning regard on your parts, and such commiseration, as his repentance seems to require. From this time then receive him, as heretofore, with love
9 and kindness. I had also another motive in addressing you with so much earnest severity, and that was, that I might have proof of the readiness of your obedience to that spiritual authority with
10 which I am entrusted. Be assured, however, that where you feel disposed to shew forgiveness in cases like the present, I am no less disposed to do the same; and in so doing act, as I trust, under the authority of Christ, for your spiritual edifica-
11 tion, and in the hope of defeating the artifices of

[a] The incestuous person alluded to in chap. v. of the first Epistle.

Satan: that we may not, either by undue severity or undue remissness, (for we know by how many ways he assails us,) give him any advantage against us [b].

Now, after my arrival at Troas with the intention 12
of preaching the Gospel of Christ, and where a favourable opportunity appeared to have been afforded me by the Lord for so doing, not finding my brother 13
Titus there, I could not restrain my anxiety to meet with him; and accordingly, taking leave of my

[b] There is much wisdom as well as good feeling in this observation of the apostle. The great aim of a Christian teacher should be rather to entice the wanderer back to the path of duty by gentle and kind expostulation, than to compel him into it by mere severity of discipline. The ill-judging but well-intentioned austerity of many truly good men has in this respect done occasionally serious injury to the interests of religion, and afforded a cause of triumph to its impugners. Look where we will into the holy Scriptures, we find them to consist more of exhortation than of reproof; of promises than of threats. It is true indeed that the latter are never withheld where necessary, but it cannot be denied that the main character of the inspired volume is a predisposition to appeal in the first instance to our affections and good feelings. No follower of Christ should for a moment forget the beautiful metaphorical delineation of the character of our great Master, as given by the prophet Isaiah. "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." (Isaiah xl. 11.)

friends in that place, I departed for Macedon.
14 And thanks be to God who, wherever I go, makes
me to triumph in the cause of Christ, and who
diffuses in every country through which I pass the
sweet fragrance of the knowledge of his gracious
15 dispensations; for I am in my ministry the sweet
fragrance of Christ to God, both in those whom
I may be the means of saving, and in those who
16 perish; to the latter, a fragrance of destruction and
death, to the former, a fragrance of immortality.
For so arduous a ministry, who will dare to pre-
sume upon the sufficiency of his own natural
17 powers? As for myself, I dare not, as many others
have done, adulterate the pure word of God, but
preach it in truth and simplicity in Christ, as I
received it from God, and as I shall render account
3 of it to God. Think not that in speaking thus of
my own ministry, I mean to make an undue parade
of my own exertions in the cause of the Gospel.
With regard to you, I certainly can stand in no
need at this moment of such a mode of recom-
mending myself, as my past services may well
stand me in lieu of any letter of recommendation
2 to you, or from you. The conversions which I
worked while I stayed among you are my best letters
of recommendation, letters deeply inscribed upon
the tablets of my own heart, and known and read
3 by all the world. Yourselves, I repeat, are my best
letters of recommendation, a letter written by Christ
himself, and entrusted to my charge; a letter writ-

ten, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, and that, not on tablets of stone, but on the fleshly tablets of the heart. This legitimate boast, 4
therefore, I have through Christ before God. Not 5
indeed that I presume to imagine myself sufficient to do any thing really praiseworthy by my own natural strength; on the contrary, I acknowledge that I owe my sufficiency to the free mercy of God; who has made me an effective instrument in the 6
ministry of the new covenant; a covenant, not like the former one given to Moses, of literal and adequate obedience to minute injunctions, but of spiritual righteousness: for the law of literal obedience is as a snare which leads to death; but the covenant of the Spirit is a law which restores to life. If then the promulgation of that law of literal righte- 7
ousness, whose consequence is death, a law engraven upon mere stone, was still accompanied with such a display of divine glory, that, as we are told, the children of Israel could not look stedfastly on the face of Moses, because of the glorious radiance of his countenance, (which radiance however was doomed to pass away, as was also that very ceremonial law itself,) shall not the promulgation of the 8
law of spiritual righteousness be attended with a more intense display of glory? For if the ministry 9
of a covenant of condemnation (for such the Mosaic covenant practically was) made its first appearance in glory, assuredly much more shall the ministry of a covenant of justification and redemption excel in

10 glory ; (in fact the glory of the former is overpowered
and quenched in the far superior glory of the latter ;)
11 and surely, if the perishable law of Moses was
glorious, the imperishable law of Christ shall be far
more glorious.

12 With this solemn conviction of the paramount
importance of my mission, I preach, as I have just
now observed, these divine truths in simplicity,
13 without guile or concealment, not acting like Moses,
who spread a veil over his face, as a type of that
dark and enigmatical covenant which he announced:
14 (a veil which his countrymen wear upon their un-
derstanding to this very moment in their exposition
of the promises of the Old Testament ; a veil which
Christ has taken away from those who believe him,
15 but which yet even now obscures the perception of
the Jewish nation when the law of Moses is read to
16 them ;—yet let them turn to the Lord, and that
17 veil shall be withdrawn ; to that Lord, I mean, who
is the Spirit of holiness, and where the Spirit of
holiness is, there also is freedom from the vexatious
18 slavery of ritual obedience :) but, on the contrary,
without veil or concealment; yet bearing, like Moses,
upon my face the reflected glory of the Lord, I
proceed onward on my glorious office, after the pat-
tern of my blessed Redeemer himself, and under the
infallible guidance of his Holy Spirit.

4 Bearing this sublime commission, and relying
upon that superintending Providence which has
guided me in time past, and still protects me, I

faint not at the prospect of the difficulties which the world may throw in my path; but renouncing the 2
secret ways of impurity, and the craft of carnal wisdom, and without compromising the pure word of the Gospel in conformity to human prejudices, I recommend the plain doctrine of truth to the consciences of my hearers, and to the all-seeing eye of God. It is to the unawakened and hardened under- 3
standing only that this glorious dispensation fails of its effect, and remains still a tissue of dark and unprofitable mystery; to those only, in whom the god 4
of this world has darkened their apprehension in wilful disbelief, so as to prevent the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, from pouring its illuminating influence in their hearts. For it is not myself that I preach, nor any 5
doctrine of merely human invention, but the word of our common Lord Jesus Christ, in whose ministry I, with the other apostles, are as your servants, to help you forward to salvation; that same Al- 6
mighty Power, who said, "Let there be light, and there was light," having graciously condescended to pour the sunshine of his knowledge into our benighted hearts, to lead us, and you through our means, in the way of the Lord Jesus. And if this 7
mighty treasure has been lodged by him, as we humbly feel it has been, in base and earthly vessels, it was that the excellence of his divine power might thereby be rendered more manifest by the meanness of the instruments which he has made available for

8 the accomplishment of his purpose. Feeling then
at the same moment my own weakness, yet in whose
service I am engaged, though hardly pressed on
every side, I falter not; though apparently helpless,
9 I despond not; though meeting with the world's
persecutions, I abandon not my hope in Him who is
able to rescue me; and though cast down, give not
10 up the contest in despair; bearing for the present
in my perishable body that suffering even unto
death to which Christ himself submitted, in the
hope that the glorious immortality to which God
raised him up may hereafter be accomplished in
11 myself also. And thus in my present life I submit
daily to the perils and agony of death itself, that
that better life which was earned for us by Christ
12 may be made manifest in this my mortal flesh. But
that which is at this moment death to me, will,
under God's blessing, be salvation and immortality
13 to you. Wherefore, as the Psalmist exclaimed in
the fulness of his faith, "I believed, and therefore
have I spoken:" such also is my language; I too
believe, and believing, will give utterance to my
14 faith; being well assured, that He who raised up
the Lord Jesus from the grave, will also raise up
and place me, together with you, before his judg-
15 ment-seat. It is for your sakes then, my brethren,
that I endure my present afflictions, in order that
God's mercy being extended to many through my
ministry may cause the thanksgivings of many to
ascend up to Him, in unceasing praise and grati-

tude. Wherefore I shrink not from the difficulties 16
of my laborious office, feeling that however my external carnal nature may be wasted in the enterprize, my better and spiritual nature is but the more and more invigorated: and knowing that these 17
trifling temporal afflictions work out for me an immense and overpowering recompense of eternal glory; whilst I look, not to the visible things of 18
this transitory world, but to the invisible things of that which is to come. For those things which are visible to our mortal senses are, like them, perishable; but those which are invisible are eternal. For 5
of this I am fully assured, that if this my earthly tabernacle of flesh were destroyed, I have still in reserve an imperishable building, not made with hands, but the creation of God himself, prepared for me in the heavens. Wherefore, whilst we con- 2
tinue in this our mortal covering, we groan and impatiently look forward to that eternal and heavenly mansion, that we may be clothed with it, and 3
so may not be left bare and destitute: for in this 4
our mortal covering we groan, not from an impatience of existence, and a desire of annihilation, but, on the contrary, from an anxious desire to put on a better covering, and that our mortality may be converted into immortality. And he who has instilled 5
this eager longing in us is God himself, who has given us, even in this life, the gift of his Holy Spirit as an earnest that we shall not be disappointed of this sublime expectation. With such a substantial 6

ground for our hope, and being assured that so long as we are resident in our present mortal bodies
7 we are in banishment from God, (for our desires dwell not upon the things of this world, but upon those purer objects which at present we can only
8 descry by the eye of faith,) our earnest longing is to be released from our present mortal condition, and
9 to be resident with the Lord. Meanwhile our unremitting endeavour is, whether in banishment from him, or resident with him, that we may be accepted
10 by him. For we know that we must all of us appear before the tribunal of Christ, in order that each of us may receive his remuneration according to the works which he shall have done in this life, whether they shall have been good or evil.

11 Looking forward then to this awful day of divine retribution, I do my endeavour to bring over my fellow men to the path of salvation, acquitting myself, by the earnestness of my zeal, as a faithful servant to God, as I trust that your own con-
12 sciences can also bear witness of me. For I wish not to boast of my own exertions, but that you, experiencing my unremitting anxiety for your welfare, may have reason to boast of me as your efficient minister in the presence of my impugners.
13 You think perhaps my zeal excessive: be it so: for it is for God's service: you wonder at the unremitting earnestness of my preaching:—it is for your
14 salvation. In this I but imitate the excessive love of Christ for mankind; recollecting, that as he in

his mercy died for all of us, so we are all dead to this world in him; and as his death was incurred 15
to give us life, so that life ought to be entirely devoted to the service of him who thus died and rose again on our account. From this moment then all 16
inferior and earthly considerations are absorbed in this one great consideration; this world has become to us as nothing, and eternity as every thing. Even that blessed Redeemer whom some of us have known according to the flesh, is no longer a suffering but a glorified Saviour; and as he has resumed his glo- 17
rified nature, so are we, his servants and followers, transformed into new creatures: the deadliness of our former condition has passed away, and a new æra under a new dispensation has commenced. This 18
is the great work which God has wrought for us, in reconciling us to himself through the meritorious expiation of Jesus Christ; and we the apostles are his ministers, to declare unto mankind this blessed doctrine of reconciliation; proclaiming that "the 19
divine Essence in the person of Christ has reconciled the world to himself, no longer imputing to them their former trespasses; and that we the apostles are his appointed messengers to convey the intelligence of this merciful dispensation." Coming 20
then to you as Christ's own ambassadors, and speaking to you as in God's own person, we implore you, in the name of Christ who died for you, be reconciled to God; to that merciful God who made him 21
who never committed sin a sacrifice for sin on our

account, that we sinners might through his redemp-
6 tion stand pure and holy in his sight. We then, as
fellow-labourers in his ministry, most earnestly im-
plore you, brethren, that we may not call you in
vain to the acceptance of this covenant of mercy.
2 Recollect, we beseech you, the words of the prophet
Isaiah, (Isaiah xlix. 8.) "I have heard thee in a
favourable season, and in the day of salvation I
have assisted thee." Brethren, this present mo-
ment is the favourable season; this present day, if
you will avail yourselves of it, is the day of salva-
3 tion. We call unto you, as God's own appointed
ministers, anxious for your salvation, and anxious
also that, by the earnestness of our endeavours, and
the blamelessness of our conduct, we may be found
to have acted worthily of our apostolical commis-
4 sion. In all things accordingly, to the utmost of
our power, we have striven to prove ourselves the
faithful servants of him whose ministers we are:—
in patience; in afflictions; in dangers; in desti-
5 tution; in scourgings; in imprisonments; in po-
pular violence; in toils; in sleeplessness; in hun-
6 ger:—by purity of heart; by sobriety of judgment;
by equanimity; by that holiness of disposition which
God's grace can alone communicate; by sincere
7 love to all men; by preaching the word of truth;
by the display of miraculous gifts; by putting on
the whole armour of righteousness on the right
8 hand and on the left;—through honour, and through
disgrace; through good report, and through evil

report:—as obscure individuals, yet exposed to pub- 9
lic observation; as daily incurring the danger of
our lives, yet escaping from the hands of our ene-
mies; as persecuted, but not killed; as in afflic- 10
tions, yet filled with joy; as poor, yet communi-
cating riches to many; as having nothing, and yet
possessing all things. O Corinthians, my tongue 11
has not been silent, nor the feelings of my heart
cold, when your salvation was at stake: if there 12
has been any deficiency of zeal amongst you, that
deficiency has been from you, and not from myself.
Let then, my beloved children, let that zeal which 13
I have manifested for your welfare be reflected back
from yourselves. Continue not, I beseech you, as 14
heretofore, in unseemly and inexpedient community
of intercourse with the calumniators of our faith;
what sympathy can righteousness have with pro-
faneness? what fellowship or intercourse can light
have with darkness; what concord can Christ have 15
with Belial; or what common hope can the believer
entertain with the unbeliever? how, without pro- 16
fanation, can the [c] temple of God be placed in con-
tact with an idol? for recollect that you yourselves
are the temple of God, as his own assertion will
bear witness; (Leviticus xxvi. 11, 12.) "I will
dwell among them," says he, "and will walk among
them; and I will be their God, and they shall be
my people." Wherefore, as says the prophet Isaiah, 17

[c] See the first Epistle to the Corinthians, chap. viii.

(Isaiah lii. 11.) "Come out from among them, and be ye separated from them, saith the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; and I will receive you."
18 And if you will do so, then you may be assured, that the promise which God made to David will be realized upon yourselves; "I will be unto you a Father, and you shall be unto me sons and daugh-
7 ters." Wherefore, looking forward to the fulfilment of these divine promises, let us, my beloved brethren, cleanse ourselves both in body and spirit from every thing which may contaminate, making ourselves pure and holy in the fear of the true God.

2 Receive me then, brethren, as one who has faithfully performed the work required of him to the best of his ability. I have wronged no man; I have misled no man; I have defrauded no man.
3 In making this boast I mean not to insinuate any thing to your disparagement; for I have already assured you of the place which you hold in my heart, and that I am prepared to live and die to-
4 gether with you: on the contrary, great is my confidence in, much my boast of, the sincerity of your faith, which has been no small joy and consolation
5 to me in the midst of my late sufferings. For my whole stay in Macedon was one continued series of unintermitting afflictions from persecutions exter-
6 nally, and internal apprehensions. But that God, who comforts those who are in calamity, sent me
7 consolation, first, in the society of Titus, and se-

condly, by the gratifying account which he gave me of your spiritual welfare, of your anxious wish to see me, your contrition for those faults which I had remarked in your past conduct, and your earnest desire to be reinstated in my good opinion; all which was a source of sincere pleasure to me for your sake. I cannot therefore regret, though the 8
necessity was painful to me at the moment, that I was induced to write to you a severe admonition; on the contrary I rejoice in the circumstance, not 9
because I was obliged to give you pain for a moment, but because that momentary pain was a holy sorrow leading to repentance; a holy sorrow commendable in the sight of God, and disarming me from the exercise of that severity of discipline which is entrusted to me. For that sorrow which is commend- 10
able in the sight of God leads to salvation through a repentance not to be repented of: but the sorrow which is produced by the carnal and corrupt motives of this world leads to death. Accordingly reflect 11
a little upon what have been the blessed effects of this laudable sorrow which my censures have produced in you: what eagerness, for instance, to convince me of the sincerity of your good intentions; what zealous vindication of your motives; what self-reproach; what fear of my ill opinion of you; what anxiety to be reinstated in my affections; what honest emulations; what earnestness of reproof against the party whom I had required of you to censure! Throughout the whole of this painful

investigation you have clearly shewn yourselves to have had no guilty participation in the criminality
12 which I denounced to you. Although therefore one object of my admonition may have been the correction of the offender, and the avenging an injured person, still my great and foremost motive, and which I have most satisfactorily accomplished, was the entire vindication of yourselves in the sight of one another, and the manifestation of your inno-
13 cence before God. Hence it was that the consolation which I derived in the midst of my afflictions from the knowledge of your exemplary conduct was so truly gratifying; and much also was that gratification enhanced by what I heard of your kind reception of Titus, and of the general good feeling
14 displayed by you all towards him. For your conduct in this respect has completely borne out all that I had said to him in your favour, so that not only my communications directly with you, but also my report to him of you, have in all respects
15 been found consistent with the fact. His own kind feeling towards you also is of the most fervent character in consequence of what he witnessed during his stay at Corinth of your ready obedience to my injunctions; and of the becoming awe and ap-
16 prehension with which you received him. I sincerely therefore congratulate myself upon the well-grounded confidence which I have in all of you.

8 And now, brethren, I am certain that you will be glad to hear of the grace and mercies of God which

have been poured upon the Churches in Macedon:
how they have borne up under much temporal 2
affliction with holy joy and patience; and in the
midst of their own many wants and privations have
still found the means of displaying their beneficence
to the wants of others; and that, without any 3
solicitation on my part, not only to the fair extent
of their means, but as I can fairly vouch to have
been the fact, beyond them. They accordingly 4
requested me with much earnestness to take upon
myself the charge of receiving and distributing
amongst our poor brethren in Jerusalem the con-
tribution which they had raised; with a truly Chris- 5
tian spirit, far exceeding what I had previously
expected, giving up themselves implicitly to God's
service, and to my spiritual direction as bearing
God's commission. In consequence of this exem- 6
plary zeal of theirs I have desired Titus, as he has
already mentioned the thing to you, so finally to
excite you to a like emulation in works of charity:
that, as you already abound in the other Christian 7
excellencies, in faith, in exhortation, in knowledge,
and in every good pursuit, and in your affection to
myself, you may also shew how largely you par-
take of this virtue also. I do not urge this as a 8
positive demand upon you, but because I am anxious
that you should not be left behind others in the
career of beneficence, and also not being quite
incurious to make this practical appeal to your
sincerity on the subject of your professed deference

9 to my admonitions. You know, my brethren, all
that our blessed Lord Jesus Christ did in his mercy
for ourselves; that being Lord of the universe he
submitted to be poor for your sake; in order that
10 through his poverty you might be made rich. In
accordance with that great example I cannot but
press upon you my decided opinion of the expe-
diency of your carrying into effect at an early
opportunity that contribution which you will recol-
lect was agitated and discussed amongst you with
some appearance of zeal so long ago as last year.
11 Now then let me urge you to carry that zeal into
effect; that, as you have professed the inclination,
you may also proceed to the performance according
12 to your means. I say according to your means,
because, where they are wanting, the sincerity of the
13 wish is quite sufficient for your acquittal; for I am
far from desiring that in the attempt to remove the
pinch of want from others you should bring it upon
14 yourselves[d]. All I am anxious for is a mutual

[d] The calm good sense contained in the admonition here given, and the cautious solicitude displayed by St. Paul in verses 20, 21, of this chapter, to place his own motives respecting the very delicate subject of a pecuniary contribution, which was to be entrusted to his management, beyond the possibility of suspicion, are worthy of observation; particularly as they afford a remarkable contrast with the vigorous exertion of spiritual discipline which immediately afterwards we find him prepared to adopt.

reciprocity of kindness in meeting each other's necessities; that, as your abundance is now perhaps available for relieving the distress of your poor brethren in Jerusalem, so the time may come when their abundance may be called in to relieve in its turn any occasional poverty which may befall yourselves. As it is written of the Israelites when they 15
gathered manna in the wilderness, "He that had gathered much had no superfluity, and he who had gathered little had no lack."

if necessary, and with the candid avowal of his own paramount claims to the foremost dignity of an apostle. We cannot help perceiving also from the whole tenor of his exhortation that the charitable donation under discussion had not been undertaken with that alacrity of zeal by his Corinthian disciples which, for so many reasons, he had a right to expect. The measure had now been in agitation a twelvemonth, and had even been made a matter of boast in the other Christian Churches, yet the actual collection was scarcely yet begun at the time of the date of this Epistle. Still however the earnestness of the writer betrays him not for a single moment into any uncharitable misconstruction of this delay, nor into any expression of disappointment inconsistent with his uniform urbanity and conciliation of language and sentiment. The tone of feeling expressed in the whole passage to the end of chapter 9, is beautiful in the highest degree, and affords a striking practical illustration of the attractiveness of the Christian character when sincerely adopting the gentle and unobtrusive morality inculcated throughout the Gospel.

16 I thank God that he has given to Titus on this
occasion the same zeal with which I myself am
17 actuated; accordingly the exhortation which he
received from me on this subject was quite super-
fluous, as he set out entirely of his own accord for
18 Corinth to arrange the matter with you. I have also
sent with him on the same mission another of our
brethren whose praise in the ministry of the Gospel
19 is spread abroad through all the Churches: and
who also has been appointed by the Churches my
fellow traveller and assistant in the management
and distribution of the fund which has been collected
to the honour of our Saviour, and the credit of your
20 liberality; as I was most anxious that no possible
blame might attach to me with regard to my stew-
21 ardship of this large sum, and that I might stand,
not only pure in conscience before our Lord and
Saviour, but also above all suspicion in the eyes
22 of mankind. I have also sent along with them
another of our brethren, the sincerity of whose zeal
I have in many instances experienced, and who is if
possible more zealous on the present occasion from
the confidence which, in consequence of my repre-
sentations, he has in your good feelings.

23 Of Titus then my recommendation to you is, that
he is my assistant and fellow labourer in preaching
the Gospel among you: of the two other brethren,
that they bear the commission of the Churches,
and that they do honour to the cause of Christ.
24 Justify then by your kind reception of them the ex-

pectation of the Churches whose messengers they are, and the favourable sentiments which they have imbibed from me respecting you.

With regard indeed to the proposed contribution 9
for our poor brethren in Jerusalem, I feel that any exhortations of mine would be unnecessary: for I 2
am fully aware of the readiness of your liberality, of which in fact I have taken an opportunity of speaking with approbation whilst in Macedon, having informed them, what you know to be true, that yourselves with the rest of Achaia were commencing this work of charity a full year ago; and the consequence was that this mention of your intention was the cause of exciting a similar zeal in others. Still 3
however, with this implicit confidence in your good intentions, I have thought it more prudent to send my three brethren to you, lest, by any accident, the expectation which I have raised respecting your intentions should be disappointed; and that you may shew yourselves as ready as I have boasted of you that you are. For it would be extremely 4
mortifying to myself, (to say nothing about the discredit to yourselves,) should the Macedonians who may possibly accompany me upon my visit to Corinth, find you unprepared with your contribution, and that I had spoken thus largely of your liberality without sufficient reason. I therefore thought it 5
necessary to urge my three brethren to be at Corinth before my arrival there, and to contrive that the donation, which I have given the Church reason

to expect from you, may be ready against my coming, that it may appear to be a willing effort of kindness on your part, and may not seem to be wrung from you against your inclinations by any
6 urgency from myself. Meanwhile remember, that "he who sows sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he who sows bountifully, shall reap also bounti-
7 fully." Let every man however give according to what he is sincerely willing to do from his heart; not against his will and as a matter of compulsion;
8 for God loves a cheerful and free giver. And that God, who reads the secrets of the heart, is able in recompence to pour his mercies abundantly upon yourselves, so that having a sufficiency of all earthly good, you may have the means of exercising this,
9 with every other good and Christian work: according to the assurance of the Psalmist, (Psalm cxii. 9.) "he hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor: his righteousness endureth for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honour."

10 May he then, who gives the seed to the sower, both give you bread to eat, and multiply the produce of the seed which you sow, increasing in you at the same time in like proportion the fruits of
11 good works; that you may be rich in the good things of this life, and may dispense those riches with liberality; thus causing his own gifts to return back to himself in sentiments of thanksgiving and
12 gratitude. For it is not only the relief of our distressed Christian brethren which is the blessed fruit

of these charitable exertions, but the harmonious concord of grateful hearts also which is thus made to ascend to the Giver of all good; whilst the poor, 13 whose distresses you have relieved, praise God as well for your perfect adoption of the precepts of our blessed Saviour, as for your unaffected and cordial benevolence displayed to themselves, and to all others in like necessity: and offer up their 14 prayers for you in the fulness of their hearts, for that display of Christian grace thus manifested in your conduct. Blessed be God for this his un- 15 speakable gift.

SECTION II.

The remainder of this Epistle contains the apostle's eloquent and indignant vindication of his own spiritual jurisdiction, against the malice of his opposers in the Church of Corinth, with a statement of his past exertions and sufferings in the cause of the Gospel, and of some miraculous communications which he had experienced in the earlier part of his ministry.

My brethren, I am not ignorant that it has been 10 said of me that my personal demeanour to you in your presence is meek and humble, but that my epistolary admonitions written to you in my absence from you are in a commanding tone of authority. Now I most earnestly intreat, in the name of the 2 humble and merciful Jesus, those my impugners, who by making this charge would insinuate that my conduct is regulated by worldly and temporizing motives, that they will not compel me to repel

this accusation in the most effectual manner, by adopting upon my arrival a harsher and more severe tone than my own inclinations would lead me to
3 exercise towards them. Be assured that, however worldly may be the feelings and passions of many with whom I am in collision, the weapons of my own warfare will always be of a spiritual character,
4 not mere carnal implements, but such as are endued by God himself with strength to pull down
5 the fortresses of human policy: such as are powerful to overthrow the strong holds of specious and carnal wisdom, and every proud feeling which elevates itself against God's revealed dispensations, and to bring every thought of the human heart into
6 captivity to the obedience of Christ; and which, even when your obedience shall be complete, will still be endued with a wholesome discipline to prevent any future wanderings into which you may
7 deviate, and to correct your backslidings. Why then draw unfair inferences from my personal demeanour, as contrasted with the tone of my writings? Let me entreat those who may have thought thus uncharitably of me, and yet who probably flatter themselves that they are sincere servants of Christ, to give me at least the same credit which they give themselves, and believe that I am as sincerely devoted to my blessed Saviour as they
8 are. Nay, if I were to assert of myself something more than this, and tell them plainly that I possess an authority over them which I have received from

Christ himself, (for your edification, I admit, and not for your destruction,) I should not in thus boasting exceed the literal truth. Away then for 9
the future with this invidious charge, that I presume upon my absence, and venture upon a higher tone of authority in my letters than I dare exert when resident among you. "His letters, forsooth, 10
are severe and magisterial, but his person[e], when amongst us, is humble, and his speech subdued and contemptible." Let those who have made this un- 11
fair remark be assured, that authoritative as my letters have been, such I can also be in person where expedience may require it. It is true I am 12
not one of those self-conceited persons who, measuring themselves by a standard set up in their own minds, presume upon an excellence which they do not possess, and form in consequence a mistaken notion of their own qualifications. Without lend- 13
ing myself to such vague and exaggerated delusions, still however I cannot but be conscious of the high ground which I occupy, nor can I avoid measuring my actual authority over you by the standard of

[e] It is well known that early tradition agrees with this passage in describing the personal appearance of St. Paul as unprepossessing. The apocryphal book of the Acts of Paul and Thecla gives the following portrait of him, which may not improbably have been derived from more authentic sources. Ἴδον δὲ τὸν ἄνδρα ἐρχόμενον, τὸν Παῦλον, μικρὸν τῷ μεγέθει, ψιλὸν τὴν κεφαλὴν, ἀγκύλον ταῖς κνήμαις, εὔχνημον, σύνοφρυν, ἐπίῤῥινον.

that commission which I hold from God himself; an authority be assured which is fully competent to
14 reach to yourselves if occasion requires. Suppose not then that you lie beyond the reach of my legitimate superintendence: on the contrary, the right of authority over you which I possess is the natural consequence of my having been the first to
15 bring you to the knowledge of the Gospel. In asserting this jurisdiction therefore, I am not pre-
16 suming to reap the fruits of another man's labours; nay, I rather hope to extend my line still further, by preaching yet more successfully and extensively in your neighbourhood, and even in the countries which lie yet more remote; but am far from wishing to assume to myself either the credit, or the authority due to the spiritual exertions of others,
17 with which I have had no participation. If how-
ever we must, any of us, boast, let us boast in the
18 Lord; for it is not the estimate which we may choose to form of ourselves, but that which is formed of us by God, which is the real measure of our value.

11 Bear then for a moment with my weakness, (for such you may call it if you please,) but still bear with it, if in reply to these undeserved accusations I state broadly and openly the claims upon you
2 which I cannot but feel that I possess. For I am jealous of you as my own peculiar converts, on God's account; and am earnestly desirous to be able to present you with my own hands as a pure

and immaculate virgin to your husband Christ;
and accordingly I cannot but feel anxious lest, as 3
the serpent deceived Eve by his subtlety, so some
false teacher may intrude himself into my place,
and seduce your minds from the true simplicity of
the Christian doctrine. Bear with me, I repeat; 4
for, even were some other teacher to come amongst
you, and to preach the faith of some other Jesus
than of him whom I have revealed to you, and were
you through his means to have received the gifts
of some other spirit than of that which you have
received, or to have heard another Gospel than
that which you have heard, you would most assur-
edly bear with him; and in what single respect 5
have I less claim upon your attention and deference
than any even of the foremost of the true apostles?
Grant that my utterance is uncouth and feeble:— 6
still let me ask, has the knowledge which it has
conveyed to you been equally so? far otherwise.
Am I a fit object for taunting remarks because I have 7
spoken meekly to you when I might have presumed
upon the authority of my office? because I have
preached the Gospel gratuitously amongst you,
when I might have demanded the maintenance of
an apostle? You know, all of you, that I have 8
submitted to receive from other Churches, what
perhaps I was scarcely entitled to claim at their
hands, the means of my support, in order that I
might not prove burthensome to you. Nay, when 9
I was resident among you, and was in absolute

want, I encumbered none of you, but received the relief of my necessities from the brethren who arrived from Macedon; nor subjected any one individual among yourselves to any expence on my own account, neither will I so subject any one of you
10 in time to come: for, as the truth which is in Christ can testify, no one shall rob me of this boast, that in the whole region of Achaia I have been, and
11 will continue to be, chargeable to no man. Why so? you will ask. Is it because I love you not?
12 God knows to the contrary: but in adopting this resolution, I do so that I may give no advantage ground to the seducers who have insinuated themselves amongst you, and would gladly draw invidious comparisons, if they might, between their
13 conduct and my own. Be assured that these men, however disinterested they may appear, have not your real benefit at heart, but are false apostles, deceitful workers, assuming the character of apo-
14 stles of Christ; nor be surprised that such is the case: Satan himself we know can assume upon
15 occasion the appearance of an angel of light. Why then are we to wonder if his agents can put on the external garb of the ministers of righteousness? but their end shall be according to their works.

16 I have said, bear with me, nor accuse me of weakness, if I plainly state my legitimate claims to your attention; or rather let me say that, even at the risk of being accused of weakness in boasting of myself unnecessarily, I *will* state them broadly

and explicitly. Well then; be it, if you please so 17
to call it, not the humble bearing of an apostle,
but mere human folly and vanity in me to speak in
my own commendation; yet if others, who possess 18
no real claim, will vaunt their own praises for the
purpose of misleading you, let me, at least, on my
own part state what I know of my own qualifica-
tions, for your spiritual benefit. Bear with me, 19
I say, and well may I use that expression, when
I recollect to what a degree, wise and sagacious as
you believe yourselves to be, you still can bear with
others. You can bear with them if they enslave 20
you; you can bear with them if they devour you:
—if they waste your property; if they raise them-
selves against you; if they strike you in the face.
I, on the contrary, am reproached by you as being 21
humble and timid in your presence; and yet, if
comparisons must be drawn, (I say again, call my
boasting weakness if you think proper to do so,)
I have rival claims to assert as forcible as theirs.
They will tell you perhaps that they are Hebrews:— 22
I answer, So am I. That they are Israelites.—So
am I. That they are the ministers of Christ;— 23
the boast on my part may savour of ostentation,
but I deliberately assert that so am I also, and in a
far superior, let me add in a far more painful,
degree:—in labour far more abundant; in scourg-
ings far beyond any suffering which has befallen
them; in prisons more frequently; in imminent
peril of death often: five times have I received the 24

punishment of thirty-nine stripes from the Jewish
25 authorities; thrice was I beaten with rods by order
of the Roman magistrate; once was I stoned;
thrice have I been shipwrecked; a whole day and
26 night I have struggled in the sea: many and ha-
rassing have been my wanderings, and in them
many my dangers from rivers; from robbers; from
Jews; from Gentiles; in cities; in deserts; in the
27 sea; from false brethren; much has been my toil
and weariness, many my sleepless nights, great my
hunger and thirst, frequent my sufferings from in-
28 sufficient food, from cold, from destitution; in ad-
dition to all which let me mention, not the least
part of my many labours, the daily care and anx-
iety connected with the superintendence of all the
29 Churches. Who is there amongst all those for
whose spiritual welfare I have made myself respon-
sible, who is weak in conscience with whom I do
not sympathize? who burns with an holy zeal
against the corruptions which surround us, and
30 finds not in me a zealous coadjutor?—If I must
boast, let me at least boast of these my afflictions
and weaknesses; for in speaking of such there can
31 be little unseemly vanity; and in saying what I
have now ventured to do of myself, God the Fa-
ther of our Lord Jesus Christ, He who is blessed
for ever and ever, knows that I have not exag-
32 gerated the truth. In addition to this cata-
logue of sufferings, I may also state the recent

circumstance, that the governor under king Aretas at Damascus kept the city with a guard of the Damascenes for the purpose of apprehending me, but I 33
was let down the wall from a window in a basket, and escaped from his hands.

Be however these things as they may, to boast of 12
my own sufferings in the cause of Christ may perhaps appear unseemly and ostentatious. Well then, let me content myself with relating some visions and revelations from our Saviour which have come within my own personal knowledge. I knew a 2
man, a servant of Christ above fourteen years ago, who (whether he was in the body at that time or out of the body I cannot tell; God knows) was caught up into the third heaven: such a man I 3
myself knew, (whether indeed this revelation befel him in the body or out of the body I cannot presume to say, God knows,) who was caught up into 4
paradise, and heard there unspeakable things beyond the power of human language to express. Of a 5
man thus highly favoured I may and will boast without scruple, but of myself I will not venture to boast unless it be on the score of my infirmities. Yet even were I to boast of myself I might find 6
abundant occasion for so doing, and yet not go beyond the truth; but I abstain, lest any one should deem of me beyond what he sees me to be, or hears respecting me. And, in fact, that the preternatural 7
revelations with which I have been favoured might

not buoy me up with undue confidence in myself, God inflicted upon me [f] a thorn in the flesh, an infirmity with which Satan has been allowed to torment me, in order that I might not become a
8 slave to spiritual vanity and presumption. Against this afflicting visitation I earnestly besought God thrice in prayer, that it might be allowed to
9 pass away from me; but the answer I received was, "My grace and support is sufficient for you; for my might is best displayed through the medium of
10 human infirmities." And accordingly, with this satisfactory conviction, I will continue to boast, and to boast gladly, of my infirmities, that the power of my Redeemer may through them be manifested upon me. Therefore it is that I even exult in my afflictions and weaknesses; in the insults to which I am exposed; in the wants I experience; in the

[f] Much needless discussion has taken place for the purpose of ascertaining what was this thorn in the flesh of which the apostle here makes mention. It has been generally supposed to have been some bodily disease; but from his own assertion, that it was counteracted by the support of the divine grace, it seems more natural to imagine that it must have been some intellectual or moral infirmity which it gave him much trouble to conquer. Be that however as it may, the candour of the avowal is a strong proof that the peculiar marks of the divine favour which he had received had not impaired that humility and self-abasement of disposition which form so indispensable an adjunct to a truly Christian character.

persecutions under which I suffer; in my destitution for the cause of Christ; for when I am naturally weak, then, by his aid, I am made strong. You 11
will, perhaps, again tell me that I am still boasting unduly of myself. If I am so, the blame is with you, and your unmerited neglect of me, which has obliged me thus against my will to obtrude my claims and services upon you: for you cannot but know that, weak and unworthy as I am of myself, still in spiritual gifts and the labours of my ministry I have been inferior to none of the very foremost apostles. You can from your own experience bear 12
witness of me, that in my person have been manifested all the tokens which denote a true apostle; I mean, patient perseverance in the execution of my office, and the proofs of the divine grace as displayed in my spiritual gifts, and my miraculous powers. In fact, what single circumstance can yourselves 13
point out in which my conduct to you was less exemplary than that of the other apostles to the other Churches? Was it that I put you to no expence for my maintenance? If this was an injury to you, forgive me for it.

I am now on the point of making you my third 14
visit: and in so doing it is my intention still to burthen you with no greater expence on my account than was the case during my residence with you on the two former occasions. For it is not your wealth I covet, but yourselves; and considering you as my children in the spirit, I feel that it is my duty to

lay up wealth for you, and not yours to provide for
15 me. And accordingly most cheerfully will I spend
my substance, and myself, for the salvation of your
souls; even though the immediate consequence of
my love for you should be the sacrifice of even your
16 affection for myself. I am aware indeed that some
of my adversaries may attempt to assert, that
although I have abstained from burthening you
with expence on my own account, still that my
forbearance may have been the result of selfish and
17 ambitious motives. To this I shall only reply, by
asking whether, if not directly for myself, I have
at any time indirectly made profit of you to serve a
18 friend? I have recently as you know sent Titus on
a mission to you, in company with another of our
brethren. Have either of them made any profit of
you? or have they not rather in all points acted
with the same feeling and forbearance with myself,
19 and walked entirely in my footsteps? Imagine not
that I am again making a boast of my own merits
whilst replying to these unjust aspersions: I de-
clare, in the presence of God, and of my blessed
Saviour, that I am now speaking not upon my own
20 account, but upon yours: for I am not without
serious apprehensions that, if these unworthy jea-
lousies are allowed to continue among you, my
arrival may not improbably be really painful to
all of us, and that a visit, intended by me in kind-
ness, may end by proving to be one of wholesome
severity: for such it must be, if I find, as I have

too much reason to expect, strifes, party animosities, ill will, quarrels, mutual reproaches, private slanders, ambitious emulations, and acts of open violence still prevalent among you: and if the 21
pride which I felt in the imagined success of my spiritual labours in your behalf is, by God's will, to receive a check, finding, as I much fear that I shall find, to my sorrow, many whose sins I have already been compelled to notice, still persevering without remorse or compunction in their former habits of uncleanness, and fornication, and lasciviousness.

I am now, I repeat, on the point of visiting you 13
for the third time; and accordingly I wish you previously to understand, that upon my arrival enquiry will be made into what misdemeanors may have occurred during my absence, and that in each case I shall proceed according as the fact shall be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. I gave you notice on a former occasion, 2
and I now repeat it in writing as strongly as I could do were I actually present with you, that neither former offenders still persevering in sin, nor any others sinning in like manner, shall escape with impunity, when I commence my enquiry into your conduct.

You ask me what proof you have that Christ 3
addresses himself to you by me. Recollect that Christ's presence has been manifested among you, not weakly, but irresistibly by the display of signs and wonders: for we know, that although he once 4

submitted to be crucified in the weakness of the flesh, he now lives for ever by the power of God; and that in like manner, as we now are weak in our mortal nature as his followers and servants, so we shall one day live together with him through the same divine power. I reply then to your question
5 thus. Examine yourselves, and search whether you are firm in this faith. Are not your own feelings a sufficient criterion whether the Spirit of Christ really resides within yourselves? or am I to suppose you
6 aliens from the divine grace? By the same test then, namely, by the spirit of faith and holiness which I may appear to possess through the grace of Christ, judge for yourselves whether or not I speak
7 by his authority. One proof of the reality of my mission to you I trust indeed will never be wanting; that I mean which consists in the holiness and purity of your lives; a proof which I earnestly pray for, not on my own account, but on yours; not that I may be found to have been a true apostle, but that you may be found to have comported yourselves as
8 becomes Christians. In this be assured that I speak
9 the truth in full sincerity. My most earnest rejoicing is in your spiritual welfare, even though the price be my own personal privations; and my first and foremost object at this moment is your reforma-
10 tion. It is therefore on that account only that I write thus warmly to you before my arrival, in the hope that I may be spared the necessity of adopting severe measures when we meet, and that the au-

thority with which the Lord has entrusted me may be for your comfort and edification, and not for the purposes of punishment.

And now, my brethren, for the present adieu. 11
Meanwhile amend yourselves; encourage one another in good works; abstain from your mutual dissensions, and live in peace one with another. So shall the God of love and peace take up his abode among you.

Greet one another with an holy kiss. 12

All the brethren in Christ salute you. 13

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the 14
love of God, and the communication of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

THE second Epistle to the Corinthians is more remarkable, as giving us an insight into the personal character and the inmost feelings of St. Paul, than as being the vehicle of any new scriptural truth, or as containing the exposition of any of the more mysterious topics of revelation. When however we recollect what in all cases is the force of example upon our habits, and remember that the example here afforded to us is not that of an ungifted individual like ourselves, but of an inspired apostle, who had, on one occasion at least, been admitted to a glimpse of the unrevealed wonders of the other world, and observe in the interesting character here depicted all that we can imagine of Christian heroism and moral elevation, combined with the most unassuming humility, the warmest and gentlest

affections, the most polished urbanity of manners, and the most guileless simplicity of heart, we cannot but consider this Epistle, if less gratifying to our speculative curiosity, at all events as replete with spiritual edification as any portion whatever of the sacred writings. And accordingly, to those persons who read the holy Scriptures for the great purpose of attaining to practical holiness, the composition now before us is replete with the most invaluable instruction. From the kind yet earnest remonstrances of the apostle to his wayward disciples, the austere moralist may learn to temper his reproofs with Christian gentleness, and to make his exhortations more forcible by rendering them less repulsive: from the example of his inflexibility on the great points of duty, the timid and wavering may study how to acquire steadiness of principle: and, from his frank yet unassuming avowal of the miraculous interpositions with which he has been favoured, the talented and highly gifted may be taught how to possess the blessings of which they may be inevitably conscious, with that humility which becomes persons who know from what source those faculties descend; whilst, from his unrepining patience under afflictions, from the consideration of which our flesh instinctively shrinks with dismay, Christians of all ages and conditions may learn how to blush at their own impatience under trials which appear as nothing when compared with those with which God permitted his great apostle to be proved.

THE

EPISTLE OF PAUL

TO THE

GALATIANS.

Various dates have been assigned to the Epistle to the Galatians, some as early as the years of our Lord 48 and 49. But as the apostle speaks in it of his second journey to Jerusalem as a not very recent event, which journey did not take place till seventeen years after his conversion, and as that last event cannot be placed earlier than the year 35, it seems scarcely consistent to assign an earlier period for its composition than the year 53 or 54. It does not appear from what city this letter was sent to the Church to which it is addressed.

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

1 PAUL, an apostle, not of men, neither by man,
but by Jesus Christ and God the Father, who
2 raised him from the dead; and all the brethren who
3 are with me, to the Churches of Galatia,—grace be
unto you, and peace, from God the Father, and
4 from our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself to
death for our sins, that he might deliver us from
the present evil world, according to the will of God
5 and our Father, to whom be glory for ever and ever.
Amen.

The Epistle to the Galatians has allusion to a heresy, which under some form or other will probably continue to contaminate Christianity to the end of time; namely, that tendency so prevalent with timid and scrupulous minds to take refuge in ritual expiations and the supposed merit of human works, as an auxiliary means of reconciliation with God, in addition to that afforded by the plenary atonement of Christ. The Church here addressed had received from its first founder, St. Paul, the great primary doctrine of "Christ crucified," as comprehending within itself the sum and substance of the Gospel dispensation: but we learn from this Epistle, that after his departure other teachers of a more worldly and speculative character had introduced themselves into that community, and inculcated the necessity of the adoption of circumcision and other rites of the ceremonial law, as concurrent requisites for justification, scarcely less necessary than faith itself. The object of the apostle, accordingly, is to bring back his deluded followers to the primitive simplicity of their belief, and to denounce this dangerous doctrine as destructive of the singleness and purity of the Gospel truth; as derogatory from the all-sufficient merits of our Redeemer; and as teaching men to build their hopes of salvation upon a false and unsound foundation. When we recollect the strong inclination which ascetics in all ages,

and under almost every form of religion, have displayed for that spurious righteousness which is sought after by the maceration of the body, ceremonial practices, and capricious forms of worship, we cannot be surprised at the degree of anxiety displayed by St. Paul to check in its commencement this destructive error. He too well knew the character of the human mind not to anticipate the vast labyrinth of superstition into which such principles have an inevitable tendency to lead their advocates. In fact, the history of Christianity in later times, not with reference to the Romish Church only, but in a vast multitude of individual cases without the pale of that community, has shewn the extreme deceitfulness of this easily besetting sin, and how very narrow is the boundary to weak, but sensitive and devout minds, which separates religion from superstition; and with what eagerness such persons will take refuge from the alarms of conscience or the instinctive dread of death in other modes of relief than that which the mercy of Providence has appointed for us. Where such morbid apprehensions exist, it is difficult to persuade the sufferers that the access to the throne of mercy has been made so easy as Scripture assures us that it is, and that through the imputed righteousness of our Redeemer all may obtain admission who humbly and earnestly ask for it. It is however, on the other hand, highly necessary to observe, that, although the apostle expressly declares our salvation to depend entirely, absolutely, and exclusively upon the expiatory merits of Christ alone, he still in this, as in his other Epistles, emphatically asserts the necessity of good works and of a holy life as the concomitant of a Christian profession, and the natural fruits of that faith which he inculcates. The rational and satisfactory principle upon which this inference is grounded must be self-evident to all those who know what Christianity really is; namely, that its object is not to supersede the necessity of human works, but to supply their deficiencies: as then the atonement of Christ was intended to stand in the place of that perfect obedience which from the inevitable infirmity of our nature we cannot but fail of attaining, it can never be pleaded by us as a release from that practicable obedience, and those works of piety, justice, and mercy, which, however inadequate as a means of salvation, are by the assistance of the divine grace at all events within our power to perform, and are therefore justly due as an indispensable sacrifice of gratitude to our Almighty Benefactor.

6 I cannot but wonder that you have so soon
swerved from the doctrine of him who so earnestly
inculcated upon your minds the great truth of re-
demption by the mercy of Christ, to another and an
7 unsound view of God's dispensations. For there is
no real inconsistency or discrepancy in the revealed
word of God, if rightly understood; but there are
some false teachers who have risen up among you,
who are desirous by their own partial interpretations
to suggest to you unreasonable doubts, and to
pervert the original simplicity of the Gospel of
8 Christ. Against such mistaken views of the cove-
nant of salvation I now therefore send my most
earnest protest; solemnly declaring, that "*if I
myself, nay, if an angel from heaven, presume to teach
any other Gospel than that which I have already*
9 *preached to you, let such teacher be accursed.*" The
assembly of the Church has on a former occasion
declared this sentence, and now I solemnly repeat
it, "*if any man teach a doctrine at variance with that
Gospel which you have already received, let him be*
10 *accursed.*" Think you that I will falsify and ac-
commodate my doctrine to meet the perverted
views of men, rather than execute with fidelity my
duty to God? that I will vilify Christ's own com-
mission, and, adapting the holy truths of revelation
to the prejudices of mankind, become their servant
11 by ceasing to be his? I distinctly declare to you,
my brethren, that the Gospel which I have preached

is no human doctrine. I received it not at first 12
from any human being, nor do I bear my commission
from any mortal creature, but from an express reve-
lation of Jesus Christ himself*. You all of you 13
have heard the history of my early life at the time
when I was a rigid professor of Judaism; how I was
a most eager persecutor and destroyer of God's
Church; and how in consequence I made myself a 14
deep proficient in rabbinical knowledge beyond any
other Jews of my own age, and became a zealous
champion of all the traditions and comments en-
grafted by our fathers upon the law of Moses. But 15
when it pleased God in his own good time, having
destined me to this office of my apostleship from
my mother's womb, to call me in his infinite mercy 16
to the task of preaching the Gospel of his Son to all

* Those persons who are disposed to assert, that a good and moral life is in itself a sufficient means of salvation, and that where that exists there is no necessity for a minute attention to the peculiar dogmas of the Christian belief, would do well to study this solemn and impressive statement of St. Paul. He on the contrary well knew to what a degree a single false position in philosophy or religion will distort every subsequent inference of a mind which has once given admission to it; and that trifling and harmless as opinions upon seemingly abstract questions may appear to the unthinking, they are in reality the operative principles which mould the character of nations, and impress upon each successive generation of mankind its peculiar and distinctive tendency to improvement or deterioration.

the nations of the Gentiles[b]; even then I derived
not my instructions at second hand from flesh and
17 blood, but instead of going directly up to Jerusalem
to commune with the other apostles, who had
preached Christ from the first, I went away into
Arabia, and afterwards returned from thence to
18 Damascus: nor did I go at all up to Jerusalem till
after the expiration of three years, when I went to
hold a conference with Peter, and remained there
19 with him fifteen days: yet even then I saw no other
of the apostles, excepting only James our Lord's
20 brother, (this account which I now give you, I
solemnly declare in the presence of Almighty God,
21 is true in every particular,) from Jerusalem I went
22 into the regions of Syria and Cilicia, and still con-
tinued personally unknown to the Christian Churches
23 of Judea, being only known to them by report as
the person who was now become a zealous convert
to the faith, and a preacher of that Gospel which he
24 once persecuted. And accordingly they gave thanks
2 to God for his mercies on my behalf. It was not
till fourteen years after this time that I paid another

[b] This is a most important fact, since it informs us that the coincidence which existed between the doctrines of St. Paul and those of the other apostles was not in consequence of his having derived his knowledge of the Gospel from them, but from their having all drawn from one and the same source; namely, the infallible communication of the Holy Spirit.

visit to Jerusalem in company with Barnabas and Titus: this last journey I undertook in consequence 2
of a revelation to that effect; and accordingly, whilst at Jerusalem, I explained to the other apostles that view of the Gospel which I had been preaching to the Gentiles; and this I did not publicly, but in private to those of the greatest authority among them, in order to satisfy them that no error or discrepancy had crept into and corrupted my doctrine. Yet not even then, although my visit was made 3
expressly for the purpose of convincing the apostles of the correctness of my tenets, not even then did I oblige Titus, who was a Gentile, to submit to the rite of circumcision; a ceremony which, however 4
harmless in itself, I objected to on that occasion, in order to give no encouragement to the opinions of some false brethren, who, jealous of our Christian liberty, were desirous to bring us back to all the slavery and incumbrances of the Jewish law. On 5
that ground, therefore, I conceded not one tittle to them of the question in dispute, in order that no concession of mine for the sake of mere momentary concord might trench upon the completeness and sufficiency of the unadulterated Gospel covenant. But though I condescended to explain to the leading 6
men among the apostles the revelation which I had been preaching to the Gentiles, yet (recollecting that God makes no distinction of persons, and that the present question was not one of personal weight of authority, but of purity of belief) even then, I

neither surrendered to them, nor borrowed from
7 them, a single iota of doctrine; but, on the contrary,
when they perceived that I had received my own
special commission to convert the Gentiles, as
8 Peter had received his to preach to the Jews, both
of us having been directly appointed and miracu-
9 lously aided by Christ; James, and Peter, and
John, the three men of most weight among the
apostles, acknowledging the authenticity of my call,
gave without hesitation the right hand of fellowship
to myself and Barnabas, in order that we might
take upon ourselves the apostleship to the Gentiles,
and they, on the other hand, continue to preach to
10 the inhabitants of Judea. In fact, the only request
which they made, and to which I readily agreed,
was that I should do what lay in my power for the
relief of our poor Christian brethren of the Jewish
nation.

11 Some time afterwards, however, when Peter came
to Antioch, I opposed him publicly to his face,
12 because he deserved censure. For on former occa-
sions, before any message had been delivered from
James on the subject of partial external conformity
with some of the rites of the Levitical law, he
without scruple had eaten with the Gentiles, and
acted in all respects with the same liberty as they;
but after the arrival of that message, he drew back,
and kept himself aloof from them, for fear of giving
13 offence to the prejudices of the Jews. And not
only he, but other converts of the Jewish nation

adopted the same timid line of conduct, so that the infection at last extended to Barnabas himself. Perceiving this, and that they were compromising, by 14
this want of frankness and steadiness, the sincere truth of the Gospel, I said before them all to Peter, "If you, who are by birth a Jew, can live without scruple after the manner of the Gentiles, and not according to the law of Moses, why do you attempt to bring the Gentiles into the bondage of that law which you have in your own person abandoned[a]?"

Even we then who have been brought up as Jews 15
to all the observances and expiations of the Mosaical law, and not as the idolatrous Gentiles, are now 16
convinced that no man is acquitted in the sight of God by the expiatory sacrifices of the law, but by

[a] The history of Cornelius, as recorded in the tenth chapter of the Acts, informs us how strong was the original disposition of St. Peter's mind to consider the Gospel dispensation as addressed particularly to the members of the Jewish nation, and how reluctant was his final conviction of the abrogation of the Mosaic ritual. Painful as is the contemplation of these little infirmities in men whom Providence has appointed as the great lights of the world, still however they are not without their use, as they afford another and a strong argument to convince us of the accuracy of that form of doctrine in which men of such dissimilar feelings and prejudices, after these short lived oppositions of opinion, were found ultimately to coincide.

faith in the mercies of Christ: and we accordingly rest our faith exclusively upon our Redeemer Jesus Christ, in order that we may be justified through him, and not through those ceremonial observances by which his expiation was prefigured: for we know that by the works of the law no man living can be
17 justified. If then, whilst we profess to look for justification through Christ's merits only we are still resorting to other methods to release us from the yoke of sin, are we not making Christ's merits subordinate in efficacy to the power of sin, by thus practically asserting their incompetency to remove it? God forbid that we should so undervalue that
18 merciful dispensation. For if I erect afresh those ritual ordinances which the Gospel dispensation has abolished, I return, so far as in me lies, to the original responsibility of those sins which Christ's blood had
19 blotted out. For by acknowledging, during my state of Judaism, the sanctions of the law, I became spiritually dead through the penalties of that law, in order that by finally submitting to the Gospel of Christ, I might be restored to life through Christ.
20 Accordingly I am now crucified with Christ; and yet I live again, or rather it is Christ who now lives within me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live solely through my faith in the Son of
21 God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. Let me not then, by returning to the bondage of the law, throw a slight upon the free mercy of the Gospel of God; for most assuredly if righteousness

could be attained by the observances of the Levitical law, then were Christ's death a superfluous sacrifice[d].

3 O senseless Galatians, who then has bewitched you to seduce you from the truth: you to whom the doctrine of Christ crucified for your sins has been so plainly laid down as the very foundation of your faith? 2 Answer me yourselves: you have many of you, as you know, received the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Were those gifts first communicated in consequence of your performance of the ritual works

[d] The whole tenor of this passage, and in fact of the entire Epistle, is no less decisive against the Romish doctrine of penances as a means of reconciliation with God, than it is against the Judaizing heresy of the apostle's days. If a mere human being can make his own personal sufferings an adequate expiation for his sins, then we may assuredly say with St. Paul, that, so far as he is concerned, Christ's death was a superfluous sacrifice. The same argument may be applied to the doctrine of purgatory. If the human soul is to expiate its own offences by its own sufferings in a future state of existence, then Christ's atonement is no longer necessary. Had the devout men of former ages been content to derive their religious opinions from the plain language of Scripture instead of indulging in their own theoretical speculations, it is impossible to conceive that these doctrines, so completely at variance with the merciful character of the Gospel dispensation, and in their practical effects so fearfully injurious to society, could have found their way into the Church.

of the law, or in consequence of your faith in the
3 Gospel of Christ? Can your understandings be so
senseless as to induce you to attempt to make per-
fect that righteousness which is of the Spirit by the
4 gross observances of the flesh? Have you cheerfully
suffered so many temporal privations in order to
release yourselves from the bondage of the law, and
to attain to the liberty which is by Christ, and are
you now returning of your own accord to that self-
5 same bondage? He your first instructor in the
truths of the Gospel, the first preacher to you of the
Christian covenant, and through whose mediation
you received the gifts of the Holy Spirit, did he
procure for you the mighty blessing, or did he work
the miracles which yourselves have witnessed, by
the instrumentality of the works of the Mosaic law,
6 or by his faith in the Gospel of Christ? Remember
what is recorded of our father Abraham, (Gen. xv.
6.) "He believed God, and it was accounted to
7 him for righteousness." From which passage we
infer, that all those who look to God through faith,
are the true children of Abraham, and not those of
8 the Jewish nation only. For God, when he commu-
nicated to our forefathers the Scriptures of the old
covenant, foreseeing that he would justify the Gen-
tiles through the medium of their faith, anticipated
the promises of Christ's Gospel in his communica-
tions with the patriarch Abraham, when he declared
to him that "in thee shall all the nations of the
9 earth be blessed." It is evident therefore that all

the children of faith, all who believe in Christ's expiatory redemption, be they who they may, are included in the blessing then pronounced upon the believing Abraham. On the other hand it is evident 10
from those same Scriptures, that all who look for that righteousness only which is communicated by the duties and observances of the Mosaic law, are subjected by that same law not to a blessing, but to an actual curse. Witness, for instance, the denunciation, (Deut. xxvii. 26.) "Cursed is every one who continueth not *completely in all the performances* enjoined by the book of the law, to do them." And who, of all the sons of Israel, shall say that his performance has been so perfect as to free him from the effects of this curse? Now that no man can 11
stand acquitted in the sight of God through the performance of the works of the law is again evident from the same Scriptures, (Habukkuk ii. 4.) "the just shall live by *faith*." But obedience to the 12
ritual law has nothing to do with *faith;* on the contrary, that law is a law of works, and of works *only*. As witness its own words, (Leviticus xviii. 5.) "the man who *doeth* all these things shall live through their means."

From that curse then which is thus denounced 13
against all who, owing obedience to the covenant of works have fallen short of the perfection which it requires, Christ has redeemed us, by becoming in his own person a curse in our stead; for such, according to the express language of the same Scrip-

tures, he has literally been, (Deut. xxi. 23.) "cursed
14 is every one that hangeth on a tree." And this he did in order that the blessing which was promised to the children of Abraham might extend even to the Gentiles, through faith in Christ Jesus, that believing in him we might receive the promises of the Spirit.

15 Brethren, let me use a familiar illustration borrowed from the every day transactions of society. When a covenant or deed of obligation between two parties has once been formally ratified by each of them, it is binding in all its parts down to its minutest literal construction; nor from that moment can either of the contracting parties subtract from or add to one tittle of the obligations thus volun-
16 tarily incurred. Now, with this observation in our minds, let us refer to the *strict letter* of God's promise to Abraham. What says it? "To Abraham, and his *seed*:" here the reference is clearly to some one individual, and not to a multitude of persons: not to thy *seeds*, but to thy *seed*: that one individual therefore evidently designates Christ.
17 Again I would observe, that this original promise of a future Redeemer in the person of Christ made to Abraham cannot be cancelled by a subsequent law which was not given till four hundred and thirty
18 years afterwards to Abraham's descendants. For if our redemption is after all to be purchased solely by our obedience to the law of Moses, there is an end of

that redemption which we look for through the original promise made to Abraham.

But if so, what then, we naturally ask, was God's 19
purpose in giving the law to Moses at all? I answer, that it was an intermediate provision intended for the preservation of religious obedience and good morals among the Israelites till the fulness of God's good time, when he should redeem the promise made to Abraham; and accordingly it was delivered by angels [c] into the hands of Moses, whom God had chosen as an intervening agent between him and the Israelites. But that Moses was ap- 20
pointed the *intervening agent* between God and the Israelites is at once a proof that the Mosaic law was, in the strictest interpretation of the term, a *covenant*, and in consequence *binding only on the contracting parties;* had it been an act of God's own absolute authority intended to be obligatory upon the whole human race, such an exertion of his power might undoubtedly have been displayed by

[c] The delivery of the ritual law to Moses by the intervention of angels is again alluded to by St. Paul in the Epistle to the Hebrews, chap. ii. 2. The book of Exodus expressly asserts, (Exod. xxxiv. 20.) that Moses was not admitted to a sight of God, although he is elsewhere described as conversing with him face to face; which is in perfect accordance with what is here stated by the apostle.

God acting singly, without any necessity for Moses's intervention between him and the Jewish nation.

21 Was then the law of Moses derogatory to the promise originally made by God to Abraham? By no means. Had the circumstances of human nature made it possible that our salvation could be obtained by perfect obedience to a law of works, I doubt not but that God in his wisdom would have
22 so arranged it. This however being not the case, Scripture, in order to conduct us to salvation by another road, has subjected the whole of mankind to the sin of disobedience, by giving them a law more perfect than our human infirmity can ever adequately fulfil, in order that the promise of redemption through faith in the merits of Jesus Christ might be accomplished in the persons of all who look to
23 those merits for their justification. Accordingly, before the covenant of faith was open to the acceptance of mankind, we were kept under the intermediate and provisional stipulations of the Mosaic law, waiting anxiously for that better dispensation of faith in Christ, which was in its due time to be
24 revealed. To return then to the question, "why did God give the law to Moses at all?" I answer, that he gave it, in order that it might serve as a schoolmaster to train us up for Christ, that our salvation might finally be consummated through
25 faith. Apply then this argument to yourselves, and recollect that the dispensation of faith having

been now at length revealed to us in the maturity of God's arrangements, we are no longer under our former schoolmaster. For all of you are now be- 26
come the sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus: for 27
all of you who have been baptized to the name of Christ, have become participators in the covenant of redemption by faith in Christ.

Henceforth then there is no distinction between 28
Jew and Gentile; between the slave and the free-man; between the male and the female; for all of you are alike comprehended in the covenant of Christ; and if you are Christ's, then you are the 29
children of Abraham, and heirs to the promise made to him and all his descendants.

Having termed you *heirs*, I would remind you 4
that a man's son and heir, however great the succession which he may one day look to inherit, is, whilst in his minority, little different from a servant, being put under tutors and guardians until the 2
time fixed by his father for his becoming of full age. In like manner we, during that intermediate dispen- 3
sation of the Mosaic law, were as children put under the provincial tuition of a carnal form of righteousness. But when the fulness of time ar- 4
rived, God sent his Son into the world, a Son born of a woman, and under the covenant of the Mosaic law, in order that he might redeem those who were 5
also under the obligations of the law, and that they might receive the full privileges of sons. And ac- 6
cordingly it is, because he has thus acknowledged

you for his sons, that God by his Holy Spirit authorizes and encourages you to invoke him in your prayers by the familiar name of Father.

7 From this moment then you are each of you no longer a servant but a son: and if a son, then an
8 heir of God through Christ. Look back then for a moment to the servitude from which you have escaped. Formerly, before you had learned to worship the true God you were slaves to the most degrading superstitions, trembling before your ima-
9 ginary deities. Now on the contrary that you know who the true God is, or rather let me say, now that the true God acknowledges you for his sons, how, I cannot but ask, can you be so lost to the enjoyment of your Christian liberty, as to be desirous of returning to the false and fantastic righteousness which consists in a slavish deference for
10 trifling ceremonies, converting your spiritual obedience into a superstitious reverence for this or that
11 day, or month, or season, or year? Brethren, I much fear that, if such be your ideas of the holiness conveyed by the Gospel covenant, all my past exertions for your instruction have been but lost labour.

12 Take not, however, amiss what I have now said, nor imagine for a moment that I speak to you in bitterness. Individually I have nothing whatever
13 to complain of at your hands. You know under what painful infirmities I first came to preach the
14 Gospel among you; and yet, I cannot but recollect

with what kind attention you received me in that trial of affliction, and hailed me, weak and broken down as I then was, as God's own messenger; as though I had been Christ himself announcing his own Gospel. What then is now become of all the 15
blessings which you invoked on that occasion upon my head? for I call yourselves to witness, that you would on that day have plucked out your very eyes, and given them to me, had I required them of you. Has your affection for me become less because I 16
have persevered in preaching to you nothing but the simple unadulterated truth[f]? False teachers, believe 17
me, have gotten among you; men who flatter your prejudices, and decry my doctrine, merely that they may supplant me in your esteem, and occupy my place. Let then your affection and obedience be mani- 18
fested, as formerly, by your persevering attention to the pure doctrine which I have laboured to in-

[f] This is a difficulty with which the ministers of the Gospel will have to struggle to the end of time. The simple tenets of revelation will not allow themselves to be bent and distorted according to the fluctuating tastes and prejudices of mankind. But the human mind becomes fastidious with regard even to the most important truths when incessantly repeated. Hence the advantage which the innovator in religion possesses over the sound and cautious teacher. The influx of new ideas is hailed as the acquisition of new truths; and a mere change of position in the human faculties is mistaken for a positive advancement in substantial knowledge.

culcate, and not merely to my person when I may
19 at any time accidentally come among you. My
dear children, with whom I am as it were once
more in the pains of child-birth until you shall be
20 completely born to the faith of Christ, I could
indeed earnestly wish that I were at this moment
with you, in order that I might address you in
stronger language than I have yet used, for I am
21 distressed and anxious on your account. You
wish, it seems, to conform to the ceremonial usages
of the law; if such be your feeling, look at least
into what is related in that very book of the law
22 which you so much admire. You will find it there
recorded that Abraham had two sons; the one by a
23 servant, the other by a free woman: but the son of
the servant was begotten according to the usual
course of nature; the son of the free woman, on the
other hand, was born by a special intervention of
24 Providence in conformity with God's promise. Now
these women are types of the two covenants; the
one, Agar, who was born in slavery, represents the
law which was given to Moses from mount Sinai;
25 for the name Agar is at this moment one of the
appellations of mount Sinai in Arabia; and accord-
ingly under this type we recognize the earthly
Jerusalem, which is at present with her children
in bondage to the slavish obligations of the Jewish
26 covenant: but the heavenly Jerusalem on the con-
trary is free, and the common mother of all true
27 believers. As it is written by the prophet Isaiah,

(Isaiah liv. 1.) "Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not, for the desolate hath more children than she who hath an husband." We therefore, brethren, like 28
Isaac, are the children of the promise. But then, 29
as we are told, that he who was born naturally persecuted him who was born according to the divine promise, even so is it now, as is manifest from the persecution which the professors of the Gospel daily experience from the animosity of the Jews. Yet what says Scripture for our comfort? 30
(Genesis xxi. 10.) "Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman." Now we, 31
my brethren, are not the sons of the bondwoman, but of the free.

Stand firm therefore in the liberty with which 5
Christ has made us free, and be not again entangled in the yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul declare to 2
you, that if you adopt the rite of circumcision, the expiation offered through Christ's merits shall avail you nothing: for I assure you, that every man who 3
adopts circumcision *as a means of justification*, by so doing enters into a positive obligation to perform all the injunctions of the law whatever: but they who 4
look for justification and remission of their sins through the ritual works of the law, have nothing to do with the redemption wrought for us by Christ; they have forfeited their share in the covenant of grace and mercy. For we Christians, aspiring to 5

spiritual holiness, wait for that hope of justification
6 which is to be obtained through faith; for to all
who have become partakers in Christ's covenant
the mere accidental fact of circumcision or of un-
circumcision is of no manner of avail; that which is
really available with God being that faith and con-
fidence in him which operates through love and
7 charity to God and man. I left you, as I trusted,
well grounded in this belief. What seducer since
my departure from you has corrupted you, and
8 turned you away from it? Most assuredly this fatal
misapprehension is not imputable to any instruction
9 which you have received from myself. Beware then
whom you resort to as your teachers; and recollect
how easily heresy finds its way even into the true
Church, and how a little leaven may leaven and
10 corrupt the whole lump. I firmly rely upon what
I know of you, that you will escape from these
seductions; but the seducer, whoever he be, must
expect to bear the just consequences of his offence.
11 That your present misapprehension of the nature of
the Christian covenant cannot be attributed to any
instruction which you have received from me is
evident from this; that I am at this moment an
object of persecution to the Jews, because I teach
the uselessness of circumcision. If I would but so
far accommodate my doctrine to their prejudices as
to insist upon the necessity of circumcision, I might
preach at the same time the faith of Christ crucified
without offence or danger.

I sincerely wish, brethren, that these false and 12
temporizing teachers were finally excluded from
your society, that you might no longer be exposed
to risk from their seductions, nor be induced to 13
sacrifice that liberty in Christ to the enjoyment of
which you have been called. When, however, I
speak of liberty, be assured that I mean not licen-
tiousness; it is not the liberty of unrestrained pas-
sion which I recommend, but the cordial and unre-
strained exercise of every kind and benevolent feel-
ing in truth and sincerity. For, after all, the nu- 14
merous and nice distinctions of the Levitical law
itself, which you so much admire, have this same
maxim as their great end and object, "that you
love your neighbour as yourself:" if therefore your 15
zeal lead only to hatred and bitterness, your ruin,
both temporal and spiritual, must be the final con-
sequence. I repeat then, let your ways be those of 16
spiritual purity and love, and the sinful and impure
propensities of your carnal nature will necessarily
lose their hold upon you. For the inclinations of 17
our carnal nature are at direct variance with our
spiritual nature; and those of our spiritual nature
with our carnal nature; each urging us in opposite
directions, so that too frequently, where conscience
would impel us one way, appetite bears us the con-
trary. But where the better and spiritual feelings 18
obtain the mastery, you are no longer under a law
extreme to mark every nice and inevitable devia-
tion. Now if you ask me what are those works of 19

our carnal nature, the indulgence in which is perfectly incompatible with spiritual holiness, I reply, that they are such as cannot possibly be mistaken.
[s] They are adultery, fornication, impure thoughts,
20 lascivious habits, idolatry, sorcery, animosity, contentions, emulations, violent anger, strifes, schisms,
21 heresies, envy, murder, drunkenness, riotous revels, and all other kindred vices: with regard to which I now solemnly warn you, as I have warned you on former occasions, that "they who do such things
22 shall not inherit the kingdom of God." On the other hand, the marks which attend a progress in spiritual holiness are these; love, cheerfulness, peace, slowness to anger, gentleness, goodness, sincerity,
23 suavity, temperance: where these form the character of the mind, no captious distinctions of the ritual law shall be allowed to strip them of their
24 reward. Recollect then, that the true followers of Christ have crucified with him their own carnal af-

[s] St. Paul has been emphatically designated as the apostle of *faith*; but this appellation can be considered as really apposite only, if under that term we mean to imply its necessary accompaniment of a holy life. This is the final inference to which all his arguments invariably tend. If he attributes any priority to faith as compared with works, it is a priority of time, and not of importance; that priority which attaches to cause as connected with effect, but which affords no criterion whatever by which to judge of their respective value.

fections and appetites; and recollect also, that "*the* 25
proof of your being led by the Spirit is your living according to the works of the Spirit;" not a self- 26
complacent opinion of your own supposed merits, or a depreciation or jealousy of others.

If then any one among you, my brethren, be 6
surprised into any fault, such as those to which I have alluded, do you who strive to walk according to the Spirit correct that person in the true feeling of meekness and charity; recollecting your very precarious tenure of your own better and purer principles, and fearing lest you should in your turn fall into temptation as he has done.

Bear one another's burthens; both their spiritual 2
and their bodily infirmities; and so shall you fulfil the holy law of Christ. For if any man prides 3
himself upon his own strength, being, as we all are, intrinsically weak, be assured that he is laying up eventual shame and mortification for himself.

Let therefore every man look earnestly after his 4
own conduct, and not draw invidious comparisons between himself and his neighbour; and so let him make himself, if he can, individually excellent, not merely relatively so: for each man must bear 5
his own responsibility for his own conduct, be it what it may.

Let every learner and pupil in the Christian know- 6
ledge, repay his teacher for the instruction he has received from him by every display of affection and gratitude in his power.

7 Deceive not yourselves, my brethren, we cannot trifle with an all-seeing God. Be assured therefore that as a man sows in good or evil works, in the like quality and proportion he shall eventually reap.
8 He who sows to the propensities of the flesh, shall from the flesh reap corruption: but he who sows to the pure inclinations of the Spirit, shall from the
9 Spirit reap eternal life. Let us not therefore be wearied in well doing; for in God's own time we shall, if we persevere unto the end, reap our reward.
10 According to our various opportunities then let us do good to all men; and more particularly to our brethren in the Christian covenant.
11 You see how large a letter I have written to you with my own hand.
12 Believe me it is with an eye to their own security from molestation on the part of the Jews that your selfish and false teachers have so earnestly pressed you to be circumcised: they fear persecution if they teach in its full simplicity the doctrine of spiritual liberty obtained for us by Christ's meritorious expi-
13 ation. As a proof of this you may observe, that those same persons observe not the other injunctions of the law of Moses, whilst they at the same time make a parade of their external mark of circumcision, and boast of their having induced you to
14 adopt it also as they have done. But for my own part, God forbid that I should boast of any thing as the symbol or means of salvation excepting Christ's meritorious atonement only: through which all

worldly interests and desires are crucified to me, and I to them. For within the pale of the Christian 15
covenant it is not the accidental fact of our circumcision or of our uncircumcision which conduces to our salvation, but the total renovation of the moral character with all its various inclinations and propensities. And accordingly to as many as live in 16
conformity to this rule, whether they be Jew or Gentile, peace and mercy be unto them. For my- 17
self, I make this reply to those who insist upon the necessity of the mark of circumcision; "that I bear upon my flesh Christ's own mark, the marks of that persecution which I have sustained in his service."

May, my brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus 18
Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

THE history of all religions is the history of the various expedients by which mankind have in all ages attempted to silence the clamours of conscience, and to avert the wrath of heaven. Terror being a much stronger stimulant to the human breast than hope, the impression entertained of the divine attributes by uncivilized nations have ever been of a gloomy and repulsive character; and consequently the expiatory rites which have been invented by a superstitious imagination under such circumstances have almost invariably been characterized by cruelty and atrocity. A propensity however so deeply rooted in the

constitution of our frame does not entirely disappear as civilization advances, and accordingly we learn from history that some of the worst superstitions of a darker period still continued to haunt mankind even in the most refined æra of pagan antiquity. The effectual death blow to terrors of this description was that given by the revelation of the Christian covenant, which announces to us the important fact of the complete reconciliation of God with the human race by means of an expiation, the completeness and sufficiency of which, if Christianity be true, cannot for a moment be doubted. A sincere believer in that doctrine therefore must necessarily, if he reasons consistently, enjoy an emancipation from superstitious fears which no other form of religious belief can profess to communicate. True however as this proposition is in theory, it is no less true, that in every period of Christianity sincere believers have been found who have wanted acuteness of perception to apprehend, or strength of mind unreservedly to rely upon, that complete liberty and reconciliation purchased for them by the invaluable atonement of Christ. Of all heresies, that which a susceptible and fragile mind most easily slides into is that of an inability to comprehend the full extent of the divine mercy. Hence it is that, conscious of its own defects and infirmities, it is ever pondering over its own little and fantastic attempts to avert the wrath of an offended God; ever striving to superadd to that great and all-sufficient sacrifice for sin once offered the tribute of its own personal sufferings, or of ceremonial rites to which from prejudice or education it has been taught to attach an imaginary value. Superstition is the canker which must necessarily take possession of every delicate mind which, abandoning the infallible guidance of Scripture, has recourse to its own conjectures for obtaining relief in a malady which nothing less than the word of

revelation can cure. We cannot therefore be surprised to find how early the abuses resulting from this very natural propensity began to manifest themselves in the Christian Church: and when we recollect to what an enormous bulk the corruptions derived from these gloomy and mistaken views have accumulated in the subsequent course of ages, we can be less surprised at the earnest and emphatic protest of the apostle against their first admission. "Let me fall into the hands of God, and not of man," was the exclamation of David, when left to choose between the visitations of pestilence or the sword of the enemy; and so will every Christian be disposed to exclaim, when he turns from the contemplation of the fearful self-inflicted sufferings of the ascetic, through mistaken notions of piety, to that calm sunshine of humble gratitude which the Christian Scriptures not only offer to our acceptance, but even impose upon us as a duty. It may be urged, however, that this mistaken estimate of man's relative position with his Maker is rather an infirmity than a sin. It may be said, "Why severely blame a weakness, the painful effects of which descend chiefly upon the head of the party yielding to it, and which may appear to require rather pity than censure?" But we shall hardly be disposed to repeat this question, when we recollect how completely destructive this view of religion is to our purest and best feelings of love to God; to our faith in the efficacy of our Lord's atonement; and to that cheerful and exhilarating sentiment of piety, which a more scriptural notion of Christianity is so well calculated to throw over our whole social existence. It is true that a superstitious Christian may be an object of commiseration rather than of personal blame: but so is every one else who sins through ignorance: but though a want of knowledge may be a justification in morals, it is no alleviation of the in-

calculable evil which results to mankind through its means. We should recollect also, that, as the minds which are naturally most alive to the best feelings of piety are the most inclined to fall into these painful errors, the measure of the injury thence resulting to them individually, as well as to society in general, is not merely the actual suffering which such principles may occasion to them; but that we ought also to take into the account the destruction of so many available means of enticing others to religion by a bright and attractive example, and the loss of so much sincere and well-founded joy, which the contemplation of the immensity of God's revealed mercies is so well calculated to produce, and which has thus by a fatal misapprehension been converted into unprofitable terror. If it be urged that our Saviour himself recommends one species of mortification, namely, fasting, as a religious duty, and himself set the example of it, the answer is obvious; that as a means of piety, as a corrective of the petulance produced by prosperity or health, it may be, and is, highly profitable: the real mistake is, when it is relied upon as actually meritorious, and as a substitute for that expiation for sin, which can be obtained through Christ's blood alone. The various forms under which this very natural but pernicious delusion has shewn itself in different ages, according to the circumstances of each respective period, is matter of curious but melancholy observation. To the converted Jew and the Judaizing Gentile of the primitive Church it suggested an anxiety to return to the vexatious Levitical bondage from which they had been recently emancipated, and to adopt an heterogeneous and ill-assorted creed, in which the practice of circumcision and other unprofitable ceremonies was considered as a concurrent means of justification with the atonement of Christ itself. A few centuries afterwards it peopled the Egyptian deserts with



INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

1 PAUL an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of
God, to the saints who are in Ephesus and to the
2 believers in Jesus Christ; grace be unto you and
peace from God our Father, and from our Lord
Jesus Christ.

SECTION I.

The object of the Epistle to the Ephesians, as of that to the Romans, is to assert the absolute impartiality of God's moral government in his dealings with mankind, and to shew that the blessings resulting from the expiatory redemption of Christ, which had been prepared by his foreknowledge before the creation of the world for the abolition of the sin introduced by our first parents, are offered indiscriminately to the acceptance of the whole human race, whether Jew or Gentile. This part of the argument occupies the first three chapters. The remainder of the Epistle consists of an earnest exhortation to an holy life, as a consequence necessarily deducible from this doctrine.

3 Blessed be God and the Father of our Lord Jesus
Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual
blessing in the heavenly things which are in Christ;
4 according as he chose us in him before the founda-
tion of the world, that we might be holy and with-
5 out blame before him, in love; having predestined
us to the adoption unto himself through Jesus
Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will;
6 to the praise of that glorious display of mercy which
he has extended to us in the person of his beloved
7 Son, by whom we have redemption through the

expiation of his blood, namely, the forgiveness of
our sins, according to the riches of his grace and
mercy in which he has abounded towards us; having 8 9
made known to us in all wisdom and divine know-
ledge the mystery of his will (according to that
good pleasure which he purposed in himself) to 10
gather together, in the completion of his own good
time, all things in Christ, both the things which are
in heaven, and the things which are in earth; that
they should remain in him. In whom both we 11
Jews have obtained an inheritance, according to
the predetermined purpose of Him who makes all
things subservient to his will; that having rested 12
our hopes in this life upon the promises of Christ,
we might hereafter receive our eternal reward to
the glory of his merciful dispensations;—and in 13
whom you Gentiles also, having embraced the word
of truth, namely, the eternal Gospel of salvation,
have reposed your belief, and have had his gracious
promises ratified to you by the gifts of the Holy
Spirit:—that awful pledge of our future inheritance 14
given to us as our consolation in this life, to comfort
us until the day when he shall redeem his pur-
chased possession, and display the whole glory of
his grace and mercy.

Wherefore I on my part, having heard of your 15
faith in the Lord Jesus, and your love towards all
his holy servants, do not cease giving thanks on 16
your account, making mention of you in my prayers,
and beseeching that the God of our Lord Jesus 17

Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of
18 Him: that the eyes of your understanding may be enlightened, in order that you may know to what an immensity of hope he calls you to look forward; and what are the riches of the glory of his inherit-
19 ance which he has imparted to his saints; and what is the immensity of his power as displayed towards
20 us who believe in him: a power which shall one day raise us up from the dead, as it has already raised Christ; calling him from the grave, and plac-
21 ing him upon God's own right hand in heaven; far above all the [s] angelic beings; and above every name that is named not only in this world, but in that

[s] The passage which I have rendered "far above all the angelic beings," is in our established version literally translated from the original Greek "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion." It is well known that the Jewish commentators arranged the angelic hierarchy into three classes, in the following order: first, Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones: second, Dominions, Virtues, Powers: third, Principalities, Archangels, Angels. St. Paul is evidently alluding to this division in the present passage, as also in chap. iii. 10. and in chap. vi. 12. of this Epistle. See also Colossians i. 16. and ii. 10, 15. Our poet Milton has reference to the same tradition in various passages of his Paradise Lost; as in the following verse,

Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers.

Par. Lost, book v. verse 601.

which is to come; and placing all things under his 22
feet, and making him to be the universal head over
his mystical body, the Church; and the fulness 23
of him who fills all things, and whose glorious es-
sence pervades all places: of him who has quickened 2
you to life in Christ; you who were dead in your
trespasses and sins, in which you once walked ac- 2
cording to the manners of this world; making your-
selves servants to the prince of the power of the air,
that evil spirit who still works in the children of
disobedience; amongst whom we Jews also formerly 3
pursued our course in the appetites of our flesh,
following all the evil propensities of our carnal
inclinations and our corrupt imaginations. For we
were, by our nature, like the Gentiles, the children
of wrath, but God in the riches of his mercy loved 4
and took compassion upon us, and quickened us also 5
to life in Christ, who like you were dead in our
sins, (for the salvation whether of Jew or Gentile is
the work of his free mercy only,) and has raised 6
you and us up together, and has given us our place
amongst the heavenly things in Christ Jesus; in 7
order that he might shew, in the ages yet to come,
the superabundant wealth of his mercy, in his good-
ness towards us in Jesus Christ. For your salvation, 8
I repeat, is through his mercy only, the consequence
of your firm reliance upon him: it is not your own 9
work, but God's free gift to you: not purchased by
your righteousness, that no man may set up his own
merits against the loving kindness of God. For in 10

all respects we are his work, created anew by him in the Spirit of Christ Jesus, that we might serve him in good works, which God has prepared and appointed for us, that we might walk in them as his servants.

11 Remember then, my brethren, that you were formerly Gentiles, living according to the lusts of the flesh; despised, because of your uncircumcision, by the Jews who boasted of their own circumcision as God's distinguishing mark impressed upon their
12 bodies; that you were in those days ignorant of your Redeemer, excluded also from the covenant of the Mosaic dispensation, and strangers to God's stipulated promises in Jesus Christ, running your career through this world without hope, and with-
13 out the knowledge of God; and then again remember with gratitude that you are now no longer aliens to him, but admitted near to Christ, and having an interest and participation in the redemp-
14 tion through his blood. For he it is who has made our peace both with himself, and with one another; having broken down that partition wall of jealousy
15 which separated the Jew from the Gentile, and having abolished by the sacrifice of himself the rigorous law of ritual injunctions; in order that out of these two divisions of mankind he might build up a new and united race; establishing harmony
16 between them, and reconciling both to God in the one holy covenant of the cross, having destroyed all the former animosity which existed between them.

Therefore has he preached the tidings of salvation as 17
well to those who were at a distance as to those
who were near; that through him, all of us, both 18
Jew and Gentile, might have one common access,
through one and the same Spirit, to God the Fa-
ther. From this moment therefore you are no 19
longer foreigners and strangers to us, but fellow
citizens with God's servants, and members of his
household: being built, as we ourselves are, upon 20
the foundation of the apostles and the prophets,
Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone
of the building; in whom all the several portions 21
being duly united form one great edifice, an holy
temple to the Lord: an integral part of which 22
edifice you yourselves are, in order that God's
blessed Spirit may dwell within you.

On this account it is that I Paul am at this time 3
a prisoner; because as a minister of Jesus Christ
I have proclaimed salvation to you the Gentiles.
For I presume that you have heard of the dispensa- 2
tion of God's mercy which has been given to me on
your account, in the mysterious revelation to me of 3
his will respecting you, (as I have mentioned to you
in a former letter, by referring to which you may 4
perceive the knowledge of the dispensations of
Christ which has been vouchsafed to me,) a revela- 5
tion which in the past ages was kept back from the
knowledge of mankind, but which has been recently
communicated to his holy apostles and prophets by
the Spirit, namely, that "the Gentiles should be 6

fellow heirs together with the Jews, and members of the same body, and joint partakers in the same blessed promise of redemption through Christ, by
7 faith in his Gospel." Of which Gospel I am a minister, according to the grace and miraculous gifts which have been bestowed upon me by God;
8 and although less than the least of his saints, I have received this gracious appointment to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of the Gospel
9 of Christ, and to teach all men the mystery of that dispensation which has been reserved among the secret counsels of God the creator of all things, [b]from the beginning of time; in order that his

[b] It is expressly asserted in various parts of the apostolical Epistles, that the redemption of mankind by the expiatory atonement of Christ was decreed by the divine foreknowledge before the creation of the world. Hopeless as must be every human attempt to enquire into the unsearchable mysteries of God's providence, still we may surely venture to surmise from this revealed fact, that the prospective arrangement then made by the infinite mercy of our Creator for averting the miseries consequent upon the introduction of sin was adequate in its operation to the gracious object contemplated by him: in other words, that widely spread as is the transmitted evil, the consequence of the fall of our first parents, the remedial effects of our blessed Saviour's atonement will one day be fully coextensive with it. This consideration may perhaps serve to lessen in some degree, though it cannot remove, the difficulty which attends that most momentous paradox in the works of Omnipotence, the existence of sin. That the

manifold wisdom, as displayed to his Church, 10
might be finally made manifest to all the powers
of heaven; according to his eternal purpose of re- 11
deeming us through Jesus Christ, in whom we have 12
confidence and a fearless access to God, in the full
reliance of faith in his promises. Wherefore, my 13
brethren, I beg you not to be dismayed at my
present sufferings on your account, which are for
your glory; and I fervently bend my knees in 14
prayer before the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
from whom his whole family in heaven and earth is 15
named, that he would grant to you grace, according 16
to the riches of his glory, that you may be strength-
ened by the gifts of his holy Spirit in your inward
nature, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through 17
faith; and that, being firmly rooted and established
in love towards him, you may be able to understand 18

same great Being, who originally made it a part of our moral constitution that we should stand in need of the trials to which we are exposed for our ultmate improvement, or who foresaw that such would be the result, provided at the same time a means to all who should not wilfully resist the offer for averting the destructive consequences otherwise necessarily accompanying such a state of probation, is indeed a mysterious dispensation which human reason is perfectly inadequate to solve, but it presents at all events no moral inference incompatible with our most firm conviction of the infinite perfection of the divine attributes.

together with the other servants of God what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of his
19 wonderful dispensations; and may perceive the surpassing and inconceivable love of Christ towards you, and may be filled with all the fulness of the Spirit of God.
20 Now unto Him who is able to do all things for us in far greater proportion than we can ask or think, by that mighty power which works within
21 us,—to Him be glory in the Church for the salvation which is by Christ Jesus, through all ages, for ever and ever. Amen.

SECTION II.

The Apostle here subjoins an exhortation to good works, which are enumerated by him under the following heads:—viz. submission to those in authority;—brotherly love;—integrity;—purity of language and manners;—sobriety;—the relative duties of husband and wife;—the relative duties of parents and children;—the relative duties of masters and servants;—holiness and faith in God.

4 Wherefore, my brethren, I, a prisoner for the cause of Christ, beseech you to walk worthily of the voca-
2 tion by which you have been called, with all lowliness of mind, with meekness, with forbearance, with
3 kindness towards one another, doing your utmost to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
4 Be as one body and one soul, as you have all been
5 called to the attainment of one common hope; acknowledging one and the same Lord; one and the
6 same faith; one and the same baptism; one and

the same God and Father of all, who is over all
things, and pervades all things, and dwells within
you all. Recollecting, however, that although you 7
all acknowledge one common Master, you are not
all at this moment called to the enjoyment or exer-
cise of the self-same spiritual gifts, but that Christ
has distributed to every man his peculiar function
according to his own good pleasure: as we are 8
assured by the Psalmist, (Psalm lxviii. 18.) "having
ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and
gave gifts to men:" (in which prophecy, by the way, 9
we may observe, that the mention of the ascension
of Christ necessarily implies his previous descent
into this world, and into the grave, from which he 10
ascended to the highest heavens, that he might fill
and rule over all things.) And according to that 11
good pleasure, therefore, in allotting to the various
members of his Church militant upon earth their
various departments, he has appointed some men to
be his apostles, some to be prophets, some to be
evangelists, some to be pastors, and some to be
teachers, for the due arrangement and subordination 12
of the community of believers, for promoting the
great work of the Gospel, and for the discipline and
harmony of his Church; until its several members 13
shall have attained that unity of belief, and that
uniform and consistent knowledge of the Son of
God, which shall mark its full maturity and its
complete and frail establishment on a scale worthy
of its divine Founder. In thus varying the character 14

of his spiritual gifts according to the existing wants of the infant Church, he has wisely provided at once for its discipline and our instruction, that we should no longer like children be capriciously tossed about from one system of opinions to another, under the influence of false and designing teachers, who
15 might attempt to waylay us by their subtlety: but, on the contrary, that holding one common faith in mutual love and good will, we might as the several members of one and the same body grow together in strength and harmonious proportion under our
16 common head Jesus Christ; under whom his whole body, the Christian Church, symmetrically and firmly arranged in all its joints and various articulations, all of them exercising their peculiar and distinct offices, increases daily in health and beauty in its progress to maturity.

17 Aspire then, my brethren, all of you, I earnestly implore you in the name of our common Redeemer, aspire to this unity of love and discipline, which may make you objects of admiration to the heathens by whom you are surrounded, nor continue to walk as they do, each man in the folly and
18 vanity of his own imagination, having their apprehensions darkened, and being aliens from the life of God, through the ignorance of their understandings, and the callous obduracy of their hearts: who, having lost the very sensation of remorse, have given themselves up to lasciviousness, and to

the unrestrained exercise of every work of uncleanness.

Not such, my brethren, is the lesson which you 20
have been taught by the pure Gospel of Christ;
if indeed you have learned it as you ought, and 21
have imbibed its precepts as inculcated by the
blessed Jesus: that Gospel whose foremost injunc- 22
tion is, that "you put away all the destructive
appetites, all the deceitful propensities, of your
unregenerated nature; that you acquire new 23
aspirations, new habits, and put on that new and 24
regenerated man which is created after God's own
image in righteousness and true holiness." In con- 25
formity then with this lovely doctrine, put away
from among you all falsehood and deceit, and let
your dealings with one another be in entire truth
and sincerity, recollecting that we are common
members of the same holy body. If provoked to 26
anger, let it at least be such as shall lead you into
no sin, nor let any provocation keep it alive till the
sun set, that your holy religion be not evil spoken 27
of. Let him who has stolen steal no more; but 28
betake himself to honest and useful labour, that, instead of defrauding others, he may have the means
of giving to those in necessity. Let no indecent 29
or filthy language proceed from your lips, but such
sentiments only as are edifying, and calculated to
afford benefit to the hearers; nor profane or dese- 30
crate that pure and holy Spirit within you, by

which you have been sealed as God's own children
31 against the day of your redemption. Let all bitter-
ness of feeling, all violence of anger, all animosity,
all clamorous contention, all injurious expressions,
with every harsh and unchristian disposition, be
32 taken away from among you; and be kind and
sympathizing with one another, forgiving each man
his neighbour, as God, for Christ's sake, has for-
5 given you. Be then in this, as in every other respect,
imitators of God, looking up to him, as affectionate
2 children to the example of a beloved parent, and
walk in love and affection one to another, as Christ
loved us, and gave himself an offering and a sweet-
3 smelling sacrifice to God for us. As to fornication,
and impure ideas, or covetousness, let them not be
even remotely alluded to in your conversation, but
let your intercommuning be such as becomes
4 Christians, without obscenity, or foolish talking, or
mimicry, or whatever else is unseemly; remember-
ing that the best use of the gift of speech is that of
5 praise and gratitude to God. For of this you have
already been assured, that no fornicator, nor person
of impure life, nor covetous person, whose god is his
wealth, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ
and of God.

6 Let no man deceive you with sophistry and false
distinctions on these points; but receive it as an
undoubted truth, that for these offences the just
anger of God overtakes the children of disobedi-
7 8 ence. Be not partakers of their evil deeds. You

were once all of you dark in your understandings as your heathen neighbours; but the Lord in his mercy has shed the light of his divine knowledge upon your hearts; walk in it then as children of light, (for the fruit of his blessed Spirit shews itself 9
in goodness, and righteousness, and truth,) seeking 10
out what is pleasing in the sight of God, and practising it. And not only abstain from any partici- 11
pation in the unprofitable works of darkness in this sinful generation, but openly mark by your words and conduct your abomination of them; for the 12
evil deeds of such men shun the light, and common observation, that they may be persevered in without a blush; but such honest disapprobation lays 13
open, and pours the full glare of day upon, their deformity. Awake then, says the blessed Gospel, 14
awake thou who sleepest in darkness; awake from the death of sin, and God himself shall give thee light. See then, my brethren, that you walk 15
steadily in that light, not as fools, but as wise men; availing yourselves of your time whilst you have it: 16
for the days in which you live are evil; wherefore 17
waste it not after the manner of the unwise of this world, but recollect what conduct it is which the Lord requires at your hands. Be not drunk with 18
wine, nor addict yourselves to riotous living, but let your habits be those of spiritual holiness, ex- 19
pressing your joyful feelings in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody 20
with a grateful heart to the Lord; giving thanks

always for all your manifold blessings to our God and Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.
21 Submit yourselves one to another in the fear of
22 God. Wives submit yourselves to your own hus-
23 bands, as to the Lord: for the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the Church;
24 presiding over it as over his own body: as therefore the Church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be subject in all things to their husbands.
25 Husbands also, on your part, love your wives, as Christ has loved his Church, and given himself for
26 it, that he might render it holy, having purified it by his blessed Gospel in the pure waters of bap-
27 tism, and present it to himself a glorious Church without spot or wrinkle, or any other blemish, holy
28 and undefiled. So ought husbands to love their wives as their own bodies; for he, who loves his
29 wife, loves himself; and no man ever hated his own flesh, but rather nourishes and cherishes it, as the
30 Lord cherishes his own Church: for we are members of his body, "bone of his bone," as Adam said
31 of Eve, "and flesh of his flesh; and therefore," as the same passage of Scripture proceeds to say, "shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined to his wife, and they two shall be one
32 flesh," (Genesis ii. 23, 24.) in which description of the union of the sexes was mystically designated also that union which exists between Christ and his
33 Church. In imitation of this great example do each of you individually cherish his own wife as

himself; and let the wife in her turn reverence her husband. Children, obey your parents in the Lord, 6
for this is right; remembering that that same divine 2
commandment which requires you to honour your father and your mother is the first to which a special and peculiar promise of a blessing is annexed: namely, "that it may be well with you, and that 3
you may in your turn live to attain to old age." And you, fathers, do not irritate your children by 4
harsh treatment, but bring them up in the instruction and wisdom which is of Christ. Servants, be 5
obedient to those who are your masters upon earth, with becoming awe and respect, and sincerity of service; and recollect that in so doing you are also doing your duty to Christ. Obey them then, not 6
merely because their eye is on you, and to obtain approbation from mere mortals like yourselves, but as the servants of Christ, and from a hearty desire to obey God's holy will: acting cheerfully and con- 7
tentedly in your humble situation, and thus shewing your submission, not so much to men, as to God who so disposed your lot in life; knowing that 8
all our good actions are recorded by God, and that whether we shall have been masters or servants, we shall all be rewarded by Him according to our works. And you, masters, be in like manner kindly 9
disposed towards your servants, not threatening them, nor presuming upon your authority over them; but recollecting that you have also a Master who is in heaven, in whose eyes the earthly dis-

tinction of master and of servant is as nothing.
10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in holiness, and in
11 the protecting power of the Lord; and put on accordingly that armour which righteousness only can supply, that, so armed, you may be able to stand
12 against the machinations of the devil. For the Christian's warfare is not against flesh and blood, which is able only to destroy the body, but against spiritual beings leagued for his eternal destruction, the various orders of evil angels who rule over the dark elements of this world, and who surround the earth looking down upon us, and seeking whom
13 they may devour. Wherefore, I repeat, put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand in the evil day, and to stand victorious and
14 uninjured. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with sincerity and truth; and having put on
15 the breastplate of righteousness; and having your feet shod with holy zeal to go on the blessed mis-
16 sion of preaching the Gospel of peace: but above all, bearing before you the shield of faith, that with it you may be able to extinguish all the fiery darts
17 of the evil one: and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Holy Spirit, which is the in-
18 spired word of God: praying also without ceasing in every form of earnest supplication, under the guidance of that blessed Spirit, not for yourselves only, but with persevering intercession also for all the
19 various members of God's universal Church. Pray too, my brethren, for me also, that divine wisdom

may be imparted to me, to open my mouth with boldness in the cause of truth, and to expound truly, and to the conviction of my hearers, the sublime mysteries of the Gospel dispensation, for 20 the service of which I am God's ambassador, though at this moment in fetters;—pray for me, that notwithstanding my present sufferings, I may have boldness to accomplish the full object of my mission, and to speak as I ought to speak.

With regard to my present circumstances and 21 condition, Tychichus my beloved brother, and a faithful servant of Christ, will give you all requisite information: I have sent him to you therefore for 22 that object, that you may know how I am situated, and may receive consolation from him on my account.

Peace, love, and faith be to all the brethren from 23 God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ.

Grace be with all them who love our Lord Jesus 24 Christ in sincerity.

THERE is a disposition natural to all religious enthusiasts, of whatever denomination, to consider themselves as the personal favourites of the Almighty, and to attempt to limit the communication of the divine mercies, not merely to their own peculiar creed, but also to some chosen few, whom, from some perhaps casual association of feeling, they conceive to be more immediate objects of God's ap-

probation. It requires, in fact, no easy sacrifice of our own partial views and worldly feelings, to enable us to apprehend fully that unbounded amplitude of benevolence developed in the revelation of the Christian scheme. The invariable result of human speculations upon the mysteries of theology has been rather to set limits to, than to extend, the scale of God's mercies. Such being the harsh tendency of the human judgment in all ages, we need not be surprised that the Jews, whose peculiar selection as God's favoured people had been confirmed by so many repeated displays of divine power, and which the undisputed possession of so many centuries had appeared completely to establish, should have clung to this flattering mistake, with a degree of desperate pertinacity which even the preaching and miracles of our Saviour himself could scarcely shake. In the Epistle to the Galatians we have seen how reluctantly even the inspired apostles emancipated themselves from it, although the indiscriminate diffusion of the gifts of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and the express intervention of heaven in the case of the conversion of Cornelius, might have been expected to remove every doubt upon that question. The solemnity of assurance with which, in the Epistle before us, St. Paul combats the same delusion, is another proof how deeply rooted was that inveterate prejudice in the Jews of his day. Those persons who are anxious to imbibe the true spirit of Christianity would do well to advert to this circumstance, which teaches us how inevitably, without the corrective illumination afforded by Scripture, the human mind will ever adapt its notions of the comprehensive and beneficent dealings of Providence to its own contracted conceptions and unjust predilections. The period in which any mischief to mankind might be apprehended from the pe-

culiar error denounced by the apostle is long passed by; but the lesson which this Epistle conveys has a secondary reference to one of the most prevalent of human weaknesses, and will therefore continue to be useful so long as our present nature shall continue to be what it is.

THE

EPISTLE OF PAUL

TO THE

PHILIPPIANS.

The date of the following Epistle, falling within that of St. Paul's two years' residence at Rome, must necessarily be placed about the years of our Lord 62 or 63.

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

1 PAUL and Timothy, the servants of Jesus Christ,
to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi,
2 with the bishops and deacons;—grace be unto you,
and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord
Jesus Christ.

This Epistle, which was addressed to the Church at Philippi by St. Paul during the period of his first imprisonment at Rome, consists of a beautiful and affecting delineation of the apostle's calm resignation under the persecution to which he was at that time subject, and of the ardency of his affection towards those converts for whose edification it was written. Although containing no points of doctrine which have not been discussed in his former Epistles, the whole composition is in the highest degree interesting and instructive as a brief summary of Christian faith and practice, and also as affording a most gratifying impression of the perfectly amiable character of the writer, and of the good disposition of those for whom he expresses such earnest attachment.

3 I thank my God in all my recollections of you in
4 my daily prayers which I offer with much joy and
5 gratitude to God on your account, for your unanimous perseverance in the faith of the Gospel, from
the day in which you first received it even to the
6 present moment: feeling firmly confident, that he
who began this good work in you will enable you
to persevere in it until its final accomplishment in
7 the great day of our Lord Jesus Christ. Nor can

I, nor ought I to, do otherwise than thus earnestly pray for you, when I recollect how my conviction of your sincerity in the faith, and of your participation with me in the gifts of the ever-blessed Spirit, gave me consolation and confidence during the period of my imprisonment, and afterwards, when I was called to make my defence before the emperor, and in my subsequent labours for the propagation of the Gospel. God is my witness how 8
ardently I love you with all Christian affection;
and I earnestly pray that the fervency of your zeal 9
and mutual goodwill may abound in you still more
and more in all holy wisdom and knowledge; that 10
you may be able to assign the grounds for the faith
which is in you, remaining sincere in your belief,
and pure in the soundness of your doctrine, until
the great day of Christ; being filled with those 11
fruits of holiness which proceed from faith in Jesus
Christ, to the glory and honour of God.

Brethren, I rejoice in being able to assure you, 12
that the persecutions under which I have recently
laboured have rather promoted than retarded the
cause of the Gospel; inasmuch as my imprison- 13
ment for the sake of Christ has been a matter of
notoriety, not in the palace[c] only, but in all other

[c] It is generally supposed that Poppæa, the profligate wife of Nero, was well-disposed towards the Christians in consequence of St. Paul's preaching at this period. Such a convert was not indeed calculated to reflect credit upon

places; and many of our brethren in consequence, hearing of the courage with which I bore my confinement, have themselves derived from thence fresh confidence to preach the word of God without fear. It is true, that not all of them have displayed this increased zeal for the propagation of the Gospel from pure and worthy motives; for though some have had no other object than to spread more widely the knowledge of Christ, others, I fear, have assumed this increased energy for no better reason than that of personal emulation against myself; these latter preaching Christ, not from any hearty wish to the cause, but solely for the purpose of triumphing over me at a time when my own exertions were restrained by my imprisonment; the former from sincere and holy conviction, and a desire to assist my endeavours in the service of truth, when I was precluded from any effectual services of my own. But what of that? Let their several motives

Christianity; but it is not improbable that her influence may have been the means of rescuing the apostle from his impending perils, and thus of promoting the cause of the Gospel. When we consider the elevated tone of morality which pervades the writings of Seneca, it seems not a very improbable supposition, that much of what we admire in the works of that inconsistent character may also have been derived from personal communication with St. Paul during his residence in the neighbourhood of the imperial palace.

have been what they may, still at all events the great purpose has been answered; whether it were from unworthy, or whether from worthy, feelings; whether in rivalry, or whether in sincerity; still the work has been done, and the faith of Christ has been preached; and accordingly most sincerely have I rejoiced, and do still rejoice, in what has occurred. For I am firmly convinced, that all this will contri- 19
bute to my eternal salvation through your prayers in my behalf, and through the protecting aid and guidance of the Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ; trust- 20
ing, as I most confidently do, that God will not allow the efforts of my apostleship to be brought to shame; but that now, as on all former occasions, whether my impending lot be life or death, I shall be enabled by my personal exertions in his cause to promote the glory of my blessed Redeemer. If my 21
life for the present be spared, it will, I am assured, be that I may expend it in Christ's service:—if I am to die, it will be for my own individual benefit. Longer life will be to me but longer toil: yet which 22
to pray for, whether life or death, I know not. Two different feelings call me in two different di- 23
rections: my own wishes lead me to long for death and to be with Christ, as far the best alternative for myself; but, on the other hand, I feel that you 24
cannot yet spare me; that my services as an apostle are yet necessary for the work of the Gospel; and feeling this, I am confident that it is not yet 25
God's pleasure to release me, but that I shall be

called to remain with you yet some time longer for the advancement of your joy and comfort in the
26 faith; and that you will have yet further reason to boast of the success of my spiritual labours among you, after I shall have been permitted to see you once again.

27 Be, however, this as it may, do you, at all events, my brethren, live worthily of the Gospel of Christ, that either, as it may please God, present with you I may see, or absent from you I may hear, the unanimity and firmness of your faith, and rejoice in your zeal and exertions for the propagation of the
28 truth. And be not dismayed at the violence of your persecutors, which, whilst it marks them as the children of perdition, is to you only another proof that your heavenly Father designs you for
29 salvation, since he has been pleased to allow you not only to profess your faith in Christ, but also to
30 suffer persecution for his sake: such persecution as you have seen me undergo on former occasions, and such as that to which you know me to be at this
2 moment exposed. In the name then of that holy consolation which we all feel in Christ, in the name of our community of Christian love, in the name of those blessed gifts of the Spirit of which, we trust, we have all participated, in the name of that dispensation of mercy and charity which our Redeemer
2 has bequeathed to us, fill up, I beseech you, the measure of my joy in you by the unanimity of your faith, the fervency of your love to God and to one

another, and the kindliness and harmony of your
social intercourse. Let no petty jealousies exist 3
among you; no desire to raise yourselves by the
depression of others; but in all your intercommun-
ings, in all your judgments respecting persons, let
each man deem meekly of himself, and prefer his
neighbours' interests to his own. Avoid accordingly 4
every selfish feeling, but let your foremost object be
the good of others; in this respect making the ex- 5
ample of Christ your model, who, although arrayed 6
with the glory of divinity, and feeling it no robbery
to be in all respects as God, yet voluntarily sub- 7
mitted to strip himself of his high privileges, and to
put on the form of a servant, assuming all the
infirmities of our nature, and clothing himself with 8
human flesh, to submit to death itself, and not
to death merely, but that of a malefactor upon the
cross: wherefore God on his part has highly exalted 9
him, and given him a name above every other
name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should 10
bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and
things under the earth; and that every tongue 11
should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the
glory of God the Father. Wherefore, my beloved 12
friends, according to that doctrine which I have
always taught, and which you have so earnestly
received, strive, I beseech you, not merely with the
former zeal which you displayed when I was with
you, but much more now that I am prevented by
my persecutors from visiting you, anxiously and

perseveringly strive, with fear and trembling, to
13 work out the great work of your salvation; for you
have God's own Spirit to assist your endeavours;
which in its mercy can give you both will to attempt,
14 and ability to perform. Perform then the duties
required of you without murmurings or discontent;
15 that you may shew yourselves a blameless and
single-minded people, the inoffensive children of
God, among a perverse and obstinate generation,
16 as lights in the midst of surrounding darkness, hold-
ing out, to those who will accept of it, the word of
life: so that I may finally have reason to boast of
you, in the great day of our Redeemer, that the
labour which I have bestowed upon you was not
17 expended in vain. God grant such a glorious
termination to my exertions, and then even though
it be my lot to be made a sacrifice and offering for
your faith, I gladly hail the conditions, and rejoice
18 for and with you. May you also, in your sufferings
in the same holy cause, feel the same consolation
which I have done, and rejoice for and with me.
19 I hope, by the blessing of our Lord Jesus, to
send Timothy shortly to you, that I may have the
20 consolation of hearing respecting you. For I have no
one with me who is so ardently and sincerely attached
21 to you as he is. The others with whom I am obliged
to associate at present have rather their own in-
terests and convenience at heart than the further-
22 ance of the cause of the Gospel; but of his merits
and good disposition you have proof as well as

myself, having witnessed with how much affectionate attention, as a son under the direction of his father, he has laboured with me in the toils of my ministry. Him I hope to send immediately, the moment that 23
I learn the result of my present business; and I 24
trust in God's mercy, that I myself shall be enabled to follow him after no long interval. I have how- 25
ever thought it expedient already to send to you Epaphroditus my brother, and fellow labourer, and fellow soldier, as my messenger to you, and one who has afforded me much assistance under my late afflictions: for he was very anxious to return to you, 26
particularly as he knew that you had felt considerable uneasiness on the subject of his recent illness. He has been indeed extremely unwell; so much so as 27,
to have been in considerable danger of his life [d]: but

[d] The following is Dr. Paley's remark upon this passage. "No intimation is given that Epaphroditus's recovery was miraculous. It is plainly I think spoken of as a natural event. This instance, together with one in the second Epistle to Timothy, ("Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick,") affords a proof that the power of performing cures, and, by parity of reason, of working miracles, was a power which only visited the apostles occasionally, and did not at all depend upon their own will. Paul undoubtedly would have healed Epaphroditus if he could. Nor, if the power of working cures had awaited his disposal, would he have left his fellow travellers at Miletum sick." This fact Dr. Paley justly observes contains a strong internal proof of the

God was merciful to him, and through him to myself also, as his loss would have indeed been a
28 fearful addition to my other sorrows. I was therefore the more anxious to send him to you, that you might have the pleasure of seeing him restored to health, and that I might have the satisfaction of
29 sympathizing in your common gratification. Cherish him therefore, in the name of Christ, with all joy, as one of those to whom you owe much;
30 for his dangerous illness was brought on by his zeal in Christ's service, in consequence of his not husbanding his strength, but overfatiguing himself in the ministry of the Gospel, whilst affording me by his own individual exertions that assistance which I have been in the habit of receiving from you all.

3 And now, my brethren, once more let me exhort you, "*rejoice in the merciful dispensation of redemption through Christ's merits only.*" This I have often impressed upon you before, but it is a sentiment which I cannot too often repeat, nor you too often
2 hear. And accordingly I repeat, beware of those

authenticity of the Epistle, and of the sincerity of the writer: a forged document would not have spared the miracle, and an impostor writing for the furtherance of his own selfish views would not have voluntarily deviated into an admission of his own inability to assist his friend in his calamity.

teachers, who, like angry dogs, bark at the simplicity of this faith, and who would adulterate it by intermixing with it the cancelled obligations of the ceremonial law[c]; beware of the circumcision which they would enforce upon you as a necessary means of justification, but which if used by you for that purpose, so far from being a symbol of holiness, will be nothing less than the cutting you off from the covenant of Christ. We in fact are the true 3
circumcision, we who worship God in the spirit of holiness, and who make our boast of the merits of Christ Jesus, and not of a mere mark impressed as a symbol upon our flesh. And yet, may I venture 4
to assert, were I disposed to make my own boast of that external righteousness which consists in carnal observances, I might do so, with as much or more confidence than themselves; having been brought up from my infancy in the most punctilious deference to all that the ritual law of Moses requires; having been circumcised on the eighth day from my 5
birth; one of the true blood of Israel by descent; a member of the tribe of Benjamin; a Hebrew from Hebrew parents; educated in all the legal learning

[c] The ideas intended to be conveyed by this passage having been suggested by the relation which exists between the Greek words περιτομὴ and κατατομὴ, are incapable of being rendered in our own language otherwise than by a paraphrase. To native Greeks the apostle's implied allusion must have been readily intelligible.

6 of the Pharisees: a zealous persecutor of Christ's
Church, which I then deemed sinful innovation;
and an observer of every tittle of those rites and
7 ceremonies which the law requires; yet all these
proud acquisitions as I once deemed them, this
carnal righteousness, I have now learned by the
wisdom which has been communicated to me from
Christ to consider but as lost and unprofitable
8 labour. And not these things only, but every thing
else, all which the world counts honourable and de-
sirable, I have also learned to consider as vanity,
when compared with the paramount importance and
excellence of Christ's Gospel; for the sake of which
I have abandoned all, looking upon them as the
vilest of refuse, in order that I might obtain the
9 great prize of salvation through Christ, and be en-
abled to shelter myself in him; not urging my own
righteousness in the performance of the law of ritual
works, but pleading my humble reliance upon the
merits of my Redeemer, and clinging to that justifi-
cation of the sinner before God which is communi-
10 cated through the medium of faith: that I may
know him, and the power of that great Being who
raised him from the dead; and that, having partaken
in the afflictions which he underwent whilst upon
11 earth, I may share also in his death, in the hope
that I may finally be a partaker in his glorious
12 resurrection. For I flatter not myself that I have
as yet attained that great object, nor the perfection
to which I trust that I shall one day be admitted;

but I pursue it with my most earnest endeavours, grasping at, and striving to lay hold [f]of, that righteousness which my blessed Saviour holds out before me. I repeat it, my brethren, I dare not as yet 13
flatter myself that I have already attained; but I anxiously devote myself to this one single object, looking forward to the end of my race, not stopping to consider the ground over which I have already passed; and keeping in my eye the glorious prize 14
which is to crown my labours; the calling of God from above to the righteousness which is in Christ Jesus. Let this glorious prize then, my brethren, 15
be the common and unanimous object of us all; and leaving the minuter differences of opinion upon less important[g] matters to be reconciled by the illumina-

[f] This beautiful picture of a humble and zealous Christian cannot be too much admired. If such was St. Paul's estimate of himself, what human being shall dare to rate his own endeavours after righteousness more highly?

[g] We have here the best practical rule for attaining that unity of faith which all mixed communities of Christians profess to aim at, but which so few attain. It is not by the litigation of minute differences of opinion, but by their accordance in those main propositions which compose the basis of Christianity, that the sentiments of large religious communities can ever be made to harmonize in one consistent whole. Where the great doctrine of Christ's atonement, and of sanctification by the Holy Spirit, are once assented to, either the less important coincidences of belief will follow of course, or at all events any remaining

tion of that Holy Spirit, who will not let you wander
16 from the truth, let us at all events be of one mind
with regard to those great vital principles which
17 form the standard and criterion of our faith. Be
you then followers of my doctrine, and of all those
who adhere to the same doctrine unadulterated by
18 human innovations; for many there are calling
themselves Christians (against whom I have often
forewarned you, and now warn you once more, and
that even with tears) of whom I must unhesitatingly
declare that they are enemies to the doctrine of re-
demption by the death and sufferings of Christ;
19 men whose end is destruction; whose God is their
belly and their bodily appetites, and whose glory is
in their own debased views and in their own carnal
20 pursuits. But our conversation, my brethren, is
there where we have placed our hopes, even in
heaven itself, from whence we look for the coming
21 of our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall

conflict of opinion will be so modified and diminished, as to render its continuance perfectly compatible with the most entire good will to God and man. But the impatience which would elevate into importance every trifling dissimilarity of feeling, so far from establishing that unanimity which it so injudiciously pursues, not only by the angry feelings which it excites, but also by the intellectual embarrassment which it creates, is the prolific mother of heresies in the Church, and of those fearful animosities which have for so many ages disfigured the society of Christians.

change our frail body that it may become like to his glorious body, through the operation of that mighty power by which he is able to subdue all things to himself. Wherefore my beloved friends, you who 4
are my crown, and my boast, whom I so earnestly love, and am so anxiously desirous to see, stand firm I beseech you in this the very basis and groundwork of our faith.

I beseech most earnestly Euodias and Syntyche 2
to be of one mind towards each other as becomes Christians: and I beg of you, my faithful friend 3
and coadjutor, to use your good endeavours towards them, recollecting the kind assistance which they afforded me and Clement, and my other fellow-labourers, whose names are written in the book of life, in the toils of our ministry. Rejoice in the 4
Lord always: again I say it: rejoice. Let the 5
meekness and forbearance of your conduct be known to all men. The eye of the Lord is upon you. Be 6
not over anxious respecting your allotment in this life; but, in all your prayers for the relief of your impending wants, repose yourselves with confidence in God's merciful arrangements, giving him thanks for all past and present blessings: and the 7
peace of God, which surpasses all that we can conceive of it, shall keep your hearts and minds, through Christ Jesus.

Finally, my brethren, whatever things are true, 8
whatever things are honourable, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things

are amiable, whatever things are commendable; whatever is virtuous, whatever is really praiseworthy—make such things the objects of your pur-
9 suit; using also your earnest endeavours to carry into practice all those lessons which you have at various times and in various manners received from me, and which it has been my aim to illustrate by my own conduct: and the God of peace shall be with you.

10 I have been much gratified, and thank our Lord for it, by the beneficent recollection you have lately testified of me, by your liberal donation, which I was aware that you had in contemplation some
11 time ago, but wanted the means to send it. I do not say this because my late privations have been any great cause of affliction to me; for I have learned to be contented with my daily lot, be it
12 what it may: I know how to accommodate myself with poverty, and not to be elevated by prosperity; I have learned the difficult art how to bear with equal temper abundance of food, or its privation; to abound in the good things of this life, or to be
13 excluded from them; for the strength which I pos-
14 sess is from Christ himself. [b]Nevertheless you

[b] It will be remembered, that the apostle has on a former occasion (2 Corinthians viii. 1—6.) spoken with much commendation of the liberality of the Macedonian Churches, of course including that of Philippi, for the relief of the distressed Christians at Jerusalem. It appears from this

have acted kindly and properly, in contributing thus liberally for my relief. You know, my beloved 15
friends, that when, in the commencement of my apostleship, I passed through Macedon to preach the Gospel in other districts also, no other Church contributed any thing to my support, but yourselves only: even when I was resident in Thessa- 16
lonica, you, on two separate occasions, gave me proofs of your liberality. Now I am far from de- 17
siring these donations on my own account; though I cannot but rejoice that your conduct has been such as will one day reap its due reward. At pre- 18
sent be assured I have no wants; your liberality has supplied, and more than supplied, them all, in the donation which I received from you by the hands of Epaphroditus; and which will have proved, I trust, a sweet-smelling, acceptable, and pleasing sacrifice to God himself. And he, the God whom 19
I serve, shall supply all your wants by the riches of his mercy, in glory, through Christ Jesus. Now 20

passage that they had subsequently contributed a fund for his own support during his tedious imprisonment at Rome, in addition to what they had formerly given towards his maintenance whilst preaching the Gospel in Greece. There is something very amiable in this interchange of kindness between the great spiritual teacher and his disciples, which presents a striking contrast with the cold and niggardly disposition displayed by the wealthy Corinthians, to which he alludes more than once in his Epistles to that community.

to Him our God and Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

21 Salute every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren
22 who are with me salute you. All the saints, particularly those of the emperor's household, salute you.

23 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

To those persons who read the holy Scriptures for the purpose of mere moral edification, and with whom the tranquil amenity of disposition which is the result of a humble and sincere faith in God, and of charity to mankind, is in higher estimation than the intellectual excitement afforded by the intricate problems of theology when considered as a science, this short Epistle will be found to be replete with the best possible instruction. It affords a faithful and a delightful representation of what a community of Christians may, and ought to, be. It is the picture of a suffering, yet, so far as the pressure of temporal affliction will permit, of a triumphant Church: a Church in which both the pastor and his flock are labouring under severe privations, and looking forward with awe, though not with apprehension, to impending persecution. Yet in the place of complaint or remonstrance we can perceive in it only the feelings of unshaken confidence in the divine mercy, of unaffected purity of heart, and of single-minded uncalculating benevolence. The harassed mind of the apostle appears to repose with delight, in the midst of his own personal sufferings, upon the recollection of the

often experienced good will of his favourite disciples; and we learn from his own words with what warmth of affection they in their turn repaid the kind solicitude of their instructor. From the perusal of this interesting composition every reader will necessarily rise up a better Christian: if not more learned in those profound and momentous truths which are developed in other portions of the sacred writings, at all events deeply imbued with those fervent conceptions, and those harmonized and chastened feelings, which constitute the main substance of practical Christianity.

THE

EPISTLE OF PAUL

TO THE

COLOSSIANS.

The following Epistle was written nearly at the same period with that addressed to the Ephesians, A. D. 61. and conveyed from Rome, where St. Paul was then a prisoner, by the same bearer, Tychichus.

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

1 PAUL an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of
2 God, and Timothy our brother, to the holy brethren believing in Christ in Colosse—grace be unto you and peace from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ.

The subject of the Epistle to the Colossians is nearly the same with that of the one written to the Church of Ephesus; namely, the perfect impartiality of God's dispensations, in calling the Gentiles equally with the Jews to a participation in the Gospel covenant. The Apostle also in the course of his argument alludes incidentally to the growing heresy of the Gnostics, and then, as usual, concludes his Epistle with an earnest exhortation to a holy and moral life.

3 We give continual thanks in our prayers for you to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
4 having heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of
5 the love you bear to all his saints, in consequence of the hope which you have treasured for yourselves in the heavens, according as it was first preached
6 to you in the Gospel of truth; a Gospel which has been communicated not to you only, but to all the world, in which it is now bringing forth the fruits of righteousness, as it has done in you ever since the merciful dispensations of God were first re-
7 vealed to you. That same doctrine which you originally received from myself, you have also sub-

sequently learned from my friend and fellow-
labourer Epaphras, who is my faithful assistant in
the ministry of Christ; and who has reported to 8
me respecting that fervency of holy love which the
divine Spirit has kindled in you.

Having received this encouraging account of you, 9
we in consequence have not ceased to mention you
continually in our prayers, intreating God that he
would fill you with the knowledge of his will in all
wisdom and spiritual understanding: and that you 10
may henceforth walk worthily of the Lord in all
that is pleasing in his sight, bringing forth abun-
dantly the fruit of good works, and increasing daily
in the apprehension of his ways; being endued, 11
by his glorious assistance, with power to bear your
present afflictions, not only with patience and equa-
nimity, but even with joy; giving thanks unto our 12
heavenly Father who has made us fit to be admitted
partakers of the inheritance of his saints, by ex-
tending to us the light of the blessed Gospel, and 13
delivering us from the power of darkness, and com-
prehending us within the kingdom of his beloved
Son: through whose precious blood we have the 14
promise of redemption, and remission of our sins;
who is the image of the invisible God, the heir and 15
Lord of the whole universe. For by him were 16
created all things which are in heaven, and upon
the earth; all things visible, and invisible, all the
spiritual hierarchy under whatever denomination
they may come;—all were created by him, and for

17 him[a]; and as he was, and is, prior in existence to
18 them all; so they all exist in and by him. He, that same blessed Being, is the head of his own mystical body the Church: he its first author; he, in his own person, the first-fruits of the grave, that in all things he might lead the way for us, and in
19 all things be supreme Lord over us. For it pleased the Father that the fulness and completion of all
20 created beings should dwell in him; and that through him, and through his precious blood shed upon the cross, expiation and reconciliation should be made for all things, whether they be things upon the earth, or things in the heavens.

21 And accordingly by that blessed redemption he has now reconciled you to himself, who were formerly alienated from him, and living in enmity to
22 him in the midst of your evil works; that having submitted his own body for your sakes to a cruel death, he might present you to God holy, unblame-
23 able, and unimpeached. Of which redemption you cannot fail to participate, if only you will remain firm and stedfast in your reliance upon him, and

[a] What can be a stronger assertion of our blessed Saviour's divinity than this passage of the apostle, which declares him to have been the Creator of all things visible and invisible, not excepting the very angels themselves? For the explanation of the words which I have rendered "the spiritual hierarchy," see the note appended to Ephesians i. 21.

suffer not yourselves to be turned away from your hopes in that Gospel which has been recently communicated to you, and not to you only, but also to every other creature under heaven; of which Gospel I, Paul, am his appointed minister. Accordingly, 24
I rejoice in my present afflictions which I undergo on your account, and readily take my share in bearing those tribulations which befal in this world the servants of Christ, in the hope that I may be serviceable to his body, the community of his Church: doing my utmost in the ministry of the 25
dispensation of God's will, which I have been commissioned to preach among you: a mysterious [b] dis- 26
pensation which has been concealed from the knowledge of the past ages, but which now, in the fulness of time, has been revealed to his saints; to whom 27
God has been pleased to make known the riches of this glorious and mystical covenant with all nations; namely, of Christ resident within you, and calling you to the inheritance of glory; whom we 28
preach; warning, and instructing all men in the wisdom of divine holiness; in the hope that we may one day present them to God perfect in the faith and obedience of Christ Jesus. For which great 29
object I spare no exertions, but strive with all the might which has been given to me by him from whom all power is derived.

I wish you, accordingly, to understand how much 2

[b] See Ephesians iii. 5.

violent persecution I have sustained in the cause of the Gentiles, not in your cause only and in that of the inhabitants of Laodicea, to whom I am personally known, but in that also of the remote nations of the earth, because I have preached the doctrine of the free mercies of Christ, to the exclusion of
2 ritual holiness by the covenant of works; in order that your hearts may be comforted under this assurance of God's gracious dispensations, and that you may be knit together in Christian love, and brought to a perfect knowledge of the immense wisdom of the divine arrangements, and of the great mystery of the eternal God; namely, of the Father,
3 and of the Lord Jesus Christ; in whom are stored all the secret treasures of wisdom and of knowledge.
4 And this I remind you of the more earnestly, because I am anxious to put you on your guard against the unsound arguments of plausible teachers, who may wish to entice you away from this great prin-
5 ciple of our faith. For though necessarily absent from you at this moment, my thoughts are continually with you, rejoicing in a well-founded conviction of the soundness of your opinions, and the stedfastness of your belief in the effectual redemp-
6 tion communicated by Christ. As then you have received from me that faith in our one common Saviour, so be careful to walk perseveringly in
7 it: taking root in it, and building upon that firm foundation on which you have been taught to rest your hope, and giving God thanks for that blessed

dispensation of mercy. Beware then, lest any man 8
lead you away captive by a false and deceitful philosophy founded upon mere human speculations, and a fanciful arrangement of the physical elements, but at total variance with the Gospel revelation: for in the person of Christ, be assured, is substan- 9
tially comprehended the full and complete essence of the Godhead: and as the fulness of the Godhead 10
is complete in him, who is placed in dignity far above all the celestial hierarchy, so is his fulness complete in you. To the faith of that great and 11
glorious Being recollect that you have been consecrated, not by the rite of a mere carnal circumcision, but by the circumcision of the heart, the spiritual circumcision of the Christian covenant; namely, the putting away of the sinful propensities of the flesh; and being buried with Christ by bap- 12
tism, that you might rise again to a new and regenerated nature through your faith and reliance on that divine power which raised our Redeemer himself from the grave. Remember then that all of 13
you lay dead in your sins, in the unsubdued and uncircumcised impurity of your natural corruptions; but that God has in his mercy given you the principle of a new and a better life through him, remitting to you all your sins; and blotting out and 14
cancelling the written law of ritual holiness, in which you could read nothing but your own eternal condemnation, and finally nailing it to his expiatory cross. By these wondrous means has our blessed 15

Redeemer stripped all the spiritual powers who were leagued for your destruction of their means of an-
16 noyance, and led them away in triumph. Let no man then for the future tempt you to compromise or adulterate this simple and satisfactory doctrine, by teaching you to repose your faith in minute and unimportant observances, of meats, of drinks, of
17 festivals, of new moons, or of [c] sabbaths, which were indeed provisionally established by the Almighty as types of the spiritual holiness which was to be revealed in the latter ages, but which were finally accomplished, and consequently superseded,
18 by the perfect holiness of Christ. Let no man, I repeat, beguile you by this or any other similar doctrine; such as that, for example, of the baseness of all material beings, and of the reverence due to all things partaking of a spiritual nature[d], a doc-

[c] It seems probable, that by this injunction the apostle intends to deprecate the superstitious observance of the holidays or days of rest established in the Mosaic law, of which see an enumeration in Leviticus xxiii. rather than to discourage the sanctification of every seventh day, as practised by Christians, for which latter usage, in addition to its enormous political importance and its salutary effect upon our religious feelings, we have our Saviour's own authority in several passages of the Gospels.

[d] The heresy of the Docetæ or Gnostics, which the apostle here alludes to, and which owed its first origin to some mistaken theories respecting the nature of the physical universe, may be traced back to a very remote period of

trine first suggested by the proud and meddling presumption of the falsely wise, who would dogma-

pagan antiquity. The very obvious superiority which, to the most superficial observer, the phenomena of mind appear to possess over those of matter had, so early as the time of the commencement of the Magian sect, suggested to the oriental philosophers the well-known theory of two self-existent, independent, intellectual principles; the one the Creator of the spiritual world and the source of good; the other the Artificer of the material creation and the author of evil. The system of religious belief founded upon these principles seems, in its later modification, to have borne a strong resemblance to that fanciful doctrine of the Platonists, which inculcated the necessity of subtilizing and defecating the human soul by acts of mortification in this life, in order to enable it to ascend after death, as it were, by a kind of specific levity, purged from the gross contagion of matter, to the abode of the ethereal essences, there to be reunited to the Godhead, from which it had originally emanated. It is obvious that this doctrine (although, from its seeming coincidence with some of the then admitted phenomena of the universe, perhaps the least irrational of all those systems of paganism which accompanied the infancy of science) is defective in the most essential requisite of a sound religious belief; namely, a tendency to promote the practice of rational morality: the purity which it enjoins being rather that fantastic holiness which consists in the abstinence from what may appear gross with reference to our bodily senses, and in the attenuation of our animal nature, than in the performance of those nobler duties which the laws of an enlightened conscience prescribe, and Christianity approves

tize upon the nature of those high things which human eye has never been allowed to contemplate;

The opinions of the Gnostics, therefore, when attempted to be engrafted upon, and identified with, the sublime and beneficent morality of the Gospel, although plausible, as St. Paul has observed of them, in their first aspect, from their accordance with a very seductive prejudice, were in reality a fatal and pernicious innovation upon the simple purity of its tenets. In the first place, by teaching men to seek after effectual righteousness in the schools of merely animal mortification, they not only inculcated a degrading superstition, but fell also into the same mistaken view of the means of reconciliation with God, so derogatory to the all-sufficient expiatory merits of Christ, which St. Paul has reprobated with such just severity in the case of the Judaizing Christians. Secondly, another inference to which they naturally led was that to which the apostle alludes in the passage before us, respecting the adoration due to the several degrees of angelic beings, who, being supposed by this theory to be emanations from the divine Being himself, were consequently considered by them as legitimate objects of worship. The great Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the body was also at direct variance with these principles; and, lastly, from the supposed impurity which was considered as essentially attached to all material substances whatever, they involved the necessary consequence of the denial of that fundamental truth of the Gospel revelation, the incarnation of our blessed Saviour. The pure and spiritual Godhead, it was argued, could never be attached to gross material elements, without incurring moral pollution; and, as this latter supposition was of course deemed blasphemous, a strange theory was

and who would turn your adoration to inferior and 19
created beings, such as the angels, from him who is

invented to meet this difficulty; namely, that a mere incorporeal phantom, not our divine Redeemer himself, had been allowed by Providence to appear for a certain season upon the earth, to perform the external functions of an human being, and finally to submit to a seeming crucifixion. To this gratuitous and wild assumption various allusions are made in different parts of the apostolical writings; more particularly in the commencement of the first and second Epistles of St. John.

In this tissue of heretical and unchristian opinions, all of them necessary deductions from one plausible but mistaken theory, we have an awful illustration of the dangerous errors into which we may be led by a single false speculation of human reason the moment that we desert, in the pursuit of our own suggestions, the safe line marked out to us by the revealed word of Scripture. But the abuses resulting from the mistaken views of Gnosticism did not terminate here: on the contrary, they were found eventually to be as destructive of even that practical purity of morals which they professed to inculcate, as they were incompatible with the general theory of the Christian covenant. It would appear at first sight a strangely paradoxical fact, did we not know from experience how many ramifications of seemingly contradictory errors may spring from one common root, that this very spiritualizing system had, with a numerous class of that school, even so early as the apostolical age, a tendency to encourage the grossest sensuality and libertinism to a truly fearful extent. That such however was the fact is established by the Epistles of Peter, John, and Jude, and by the concurrent testimony

the head of all things, and whose body we the several members of his Church are; members knit

of most of the early Christian writers. This singular circumstance we may however perhaps account for by recollecting the parallel error which has laid the foundation of Antinomianism in more recent times. In the instance of both these heresies, the effort to elevate by every possible argument the *spiritual* portion of our nature, by the depression and degradation of the *animal*, seems to have led to the monstrous conclusion, that the abuse of so worthless and unimportant a part of our constitution as the bodily senses must be a matter of perfect indifference to the soul itself, whose totally distinct and far superior functions could never derive any real contamination from the conduct of its ill-assorted and mortal companion. As the human heart is continually lying in wait for every the most trivial pretext for the indulgence of its corrupt appetites, we cannot accordingly be surprised that this theory, hollow and unsubstantial as it is, should have had sufficient plausibility to conciliate that numerous portion of mankind who would gladly embrace religion, yet want strength of mind to part with their sensual enjoyments, and who therefore strive to render compatible that which God has eternally disjoined, spiritual holiness, and practical immorality.

Such was the character of one of the earliest and most pernicious heresies which has disfigured Christianity, and which continued to linger in the eastern Churches considerably after the apostolical times. The last form under which it appeared was that of the sect of the Manicheans, which so deeply polluted the pure stream of divine truth in the latter part of the third, and during the greater part

together by him in symmetrical arrangement, and mutual subservience one to the other, and growing up under him to the full maturity of spiritual holiness. If then you be really dead with Christ to all 20
the carnal elements of this world, why, as though still living in this world, do you continue to tamper with these deluding and human speculations, imagin- 21
ing that holiness consists in a fanciful imitation of spiritual essences, and in proscribing the common and legitimate exercise of our corporeal functions; with all the other wild conceptions of a fantastic 22
philosophy on the subject of our perishable nature: a philosophy plausible in its first aspect to our 23
human prejudices, but the natural consequences of which is rather the degradation of our animal constitution by its neglect, than its elevation and correction by a wise and holy discipline?

Being then risen with Christ to a new and holier 3

of the fourth centuries, numbering at one season among its votaries the powerful mind of Augustine himself. If we are to believe the charges brought by the Church of Rome against the Albigenses, (and in this respect its assertion appears worthy of credit,) the opinions of that unfortunate people also were, at a much more recent period, infected with the same taint: a circumstance which cannot diminish our indignation at the atrocities exercised against them under that plea, but which must necessarily lower the admiration with which, upon other grounds, we are naturally disposed to regard them.

life, let it be your great object to live according to this blessed change, and to turn your attention henceforward from these earthly speculations to that heaven where Christ sits at the right hand of
2 God. Set your affections accordingly not upon
3 terrestrial, but upon celestial things: for you are dead to this world, and your better life is at present in store for you with Christ in God's keeping;
4 when therefore Christ shall appear at his second coming, then also shall you appear with him in
5 glory. Meanwhile consider your mortal members as dead, together with all their corrupt desires; abstaining from fornication, uncleanness, sins against nature, evil and inordinate appetites, and avarice
6 which is a species of idolatry; for all which offences the wrath of God comes upon the children of dis-
7 obedience; in which enormities yourselves once lived, during your unconverted and carnal course.
8 If however these propensities are now dead within you, as I trust they are, then, in the next place[e],

[e] The apostle here appears to make a distinction between those sins the indulgence in which, from their deep enormity, is perfectly irreconcileable under all circumstances with a sincere profession of Christianity, and those which, as resulting rather from the infirmities natural to the human temper than from deliberate ill intention, or unrestrained habit, may occasionally continue to cling to the character even after some progress is made in the work of conversion. It should be recollected, however, that these last-mentioned failings, though of a somewhat less

put away those which still cling to our nature, even after its grosser inclinations are subdued; I mean, perversity of temper, violent anger, ill will, evil speaking, with all light and indelicate conversation; use also no deceit one with the other, recollecting 9 that you have renounced all the evil practices of your unregenerated nature, and have put on the 10 new man; that renovated character which is formed in the knowledge of divine wisdom, after the image of God himself. Under which character all the former distinctions which separated nation from nation, and man from man, are for ever and effectually done away; so that it is no longer a question 11 which is the Gentile or which is the Jew; which the circumcised or which the uncircumcised; which the Barbarian, which the Scythian; which the slave, which the free man; but one single designation, that of "Christian," alike comprehends and defines you all. Put on therefore, as God's own holy and 12 beloved children, habits of compassion, kindness, meekness, gentleness, slowness to anger; bearing 13 with one another, and forgiving each man his

deep dye than the others, are still incompatible with that high degree of purity which our religion enjoins; they may be to a certain degree venial so long as they are the growth of ignorance, or of feelings not yet perfectly subdued by religious discipline; but he cannot be said to be a real Christian in the full acceptation of the term who continues wilfully to offend in any one of them, however trivial they may appear, when contrasted with graver enormities.

neighbour's offences and provocations, as Christ has in his mercy forgiven yours towards himself.
14 And above all things put on Christian love and charity, which is the great band of union by which all the other Christian virtues are held together.
15 And let the peace of God reign in your hearts, that you may serve him with one mind, as you are personally collected together in one body: and offer with one accord your joint praises and thanksgiv-
16 ings to him. Let the holy word of Christ dwell within you, bringing forth fruit abundantly; that you may be filled with divine wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another with psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing to the Lord in your
17 hearts with thankfulness. And whatsoever you do, in word or deed, do it in the name and for the glory of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to our God and Father through him.

18 Wives, submit yourselves to your respective husbands, and in so doing shew your obedience to Christ.

19 Husbands, love your wives, and use no harshness towards them.

20 Children, obey your parents in all things; for such conduct is pleasing to the Lord.

21 Fathers, do not act tyrannically towards your children, lest they become careless of your affection from discouragement.

22 Servants, obey your masters upon earth, not merely whilst their eye is upon you, and from in-

terested motives, but from a sincere wish to perform the duties of your station, and from the fear of God: and whatever you do, do it from the heart, that it 23 may be seen of God, and not of men: recollecting 24 that it is from God that you will one day receive your reward; for you are his and Christ's servants. But he, on the other hand, who acts dishonestly 25 towards his earthly master, shall receive hereafter the punishment of his dishonesty. For God is not partial, or a respecter of persons.

Masters, give to your servants their due in fair- 4 ness and justice; remembering that you have yourselves a Master, namely, Jesus Christ.

All of you, my brethren, continue perseveringly 2 in prayer, using it on all suitable occasions, with thanksgiving to God for his many mercies.

Pray also for me, my brethren, that God may 3 give me a fluent and persuasive speech, that I may be able to preach effectually the doctrines of that Gospel for which I am now suffering imprisonment, and that I may speak as I ought to speak. 4

Walk prudently with regard to the pagan autho- 5 rities of this world, not bringing into unnecessary [f]

[f] It is worthy of observation how diametrically opposite this sensible injunction is to that fanatical spirit which aims at momentary excitement by wilfully incurring unnecessary persecution, and which prefers the applause and admiration of men to the unostentatious but substantial advancement of the cause of truth.

risk that time which God has allotted you upon earth for the working out your salvation.

6 Let your conversation be at all times, such as becomes Christians, seasoned with the salt of holiness, that you may know how to answer every man properly.

7 My beloved brother, and faithful assistant, and fellow-servant in the ministry of the Gospel, Tychichus, will explain to you my present circumstances:
8 whom I have sent to you for that purpose, and that he may enquire also after your affairs, and afford
9 you consolation on my account. I have also sent Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, and one of your own citizens, to bear him company. From them you will learn every thing which has occurred to me here.

10 Aristarchus my fellow-prisoner salutes you; and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, respecting whom you have received my injunction, that should he
11 come to you you should receive him kindly. Jesus also who is surnamed Justus salutes you. All these are of the Jewish nation, and the only ones from that quarter who have assisted me in the ministry of the Gospel, and been a comfort to me
12 in my sufferings. Epaphras, the servant of Christ, whom you sent to me, and who continues to pray incessantly for you that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God, also salutes you by
13 me. I can bear witness for him that he is very zealous for you, and for all our brethren in Laodicea

and in Hierapolis. Our beloved brother Luke the 14
physician, and Demas also salute you. Salute from 15
me the brethren in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and
the congregation of believers in his house. And 16
when this Epistle has been read among you, let it
also be read in the Church of Laodicea; and do
you in your turn read in your Church that which
I have written to the Laodiceans. And enjoin 17
Archippus, that he take heed to the ministry which
he has received from the Lord, to do his duty in it.
I send my own salutation written with my own 18
hand. Remember my fetters which I endure for
the sake of the Gospel. Grace be with you. Amen.

Dr. Paley has observed, that, as the Epistle to the Ephesians and this to the Colossians were written nearly at the same time, having been forwarded to the parties addressed by the hands of the same bearer, and for nearly the same object, a more than usual coincidence, not only of sentiment, but of style and arrangement, might be expected to exist between them, marking not only the mind of the same author, but also of the same author under nearly the same identical circumstances. And such he has shewn to be actually the case. The resemblance is by no means that of a mere transcript, but it is still such as would naturally exist where the writer, having his mind strongly impressed with one main idea, unconsciously and unintentionally repeats himself in his correspondence with two different parties. The same acute observation, which is so strongly confirmatory of the authenticity of these

compositions, may also in some degree be applied to the Epistle to the Philippians, written, like the one before us, during the apostle's imprisonment at Rome, and which accordingly, in his mode of alluding to that circumstance, marks the same identity of authorship with it, and consequently with that addressed to the Ephesians. The general precepts contained in this Epistle differ little from those advanced by St. Paul on former occasions; but they are as usual characterized by that earnestness, gentleness, and sincerity of manner, with that fervent piety of sentiment, which in all the writings of that great apostle convey to us so vivid a conception of the splendid moral and intellectual qualities which combined to form his character; and which have rendered all his productions not less beautiful and impressive, than they are, as specimens of acute reasoning, cogent and instructive.

THE

FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL

TO THE

THESSALONIANS.

The date usually assigned to the following Epistle is the year of Christ 52. From the circumstance of its professing to be the address of Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, to the Thessalonian Church, it is supposed to have been written at Corinth at the time when those three persons were together resident in that city, as stated in Acts xiii. 5.

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

1 PAUL and Silvanus and Timothy to the Church of Thessalonica, which is in the faith of God the Father and of the Lord Jesus Christ—grace and peace be to you from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

The object of the apostle in the following address to the Church of Thessalonica appears to have been to console them under the severe persecutions which both he and they were at that time sustaining from the Jewish authorities. This Epistle, although suggested by local and temporary circumstances, is well adapted for the consolation and instruction of Christians in all ages, and under all possible conditions of life. Every sentence is marked by the usual amenity and kindness of the writer's affectionate disposition; whilst in his allusion to that great source of religious comfort, the certainty of a future state of existence, and in his inculcation of the consequent duties of holiness and good works, he rises to a high tone of earnest and energetic eloquence not often exceeded in any other portions of the sacred writings.

2 We return continual thanks to God for you,
3 making mention of you in our prayers, from the unceasing recollection which we have of your work of faith, and labour of Christian love, with your persevering hope and confidence in our Lord Jesus
4 Christ, in the sight of God and our Father; knowing, as we do, my brethren beloved of God, that he has indeed elected you to be a Church holy unto
5 himself; inasmuch as the Gospel which we preached to you has been effectual, not in word only, but has

also been confirmed by God's own sanction, namely, the miracles which he has worked among you by our means; the gifts of the Holy Spirit which he has conferred upon you; and the deep rooted faith which he has wrought within you; whilst you also, on your part, have known no less certainly of us, with what persevering zeal and sincerity we have laboured for your benefit in the work of our ministry. You have accordingly become imitators of us, and 6
of our blessed Master, receiving the word of truth, though at the price of much affliction and persecution, with that joyful alacrity which is the blessed fruit of the Holy Spirit within you: so that you 7
have become examples to all the believers both in Macedon and Achaia. For the tidings of the Gospel 8
have gone forth from among you, not only through Macedon and Achaia, but even in remote regions your conversion to God and the fervency of your faith have been generally reported; common ru- 9
mour, without any agency of ours, reporting in all quarters the rapid success of our endeavours in your district; and with what readiness you turned away, in consequence of our preaching, from your former idolatry, and betook yourselves to the worship of the true and eternal God: waiting with 10
confidence for the second coming of his Son from heaven; of that Son, the blessed Jesus, whom he has already raised from the dead, and who we humbly hope will be our place of refuge from the wrath to come.

2 Yourselves, brethren, will well remember the signal success which attended our first arrival among
2 you: how, after having suffered many insults and persecutions at Philippi, we notwithstanding proceeded undismayed, and in full confidence of God's protection, to announce to you, amidst the clamours of unbelievers, the glad tidings of the blessed Gos-
3 pel. Our exhortation to you accordingly was delivered in full sincerity and candour, not accommodating itself to the tortuous and impure feeling of
4 human passions, but displaying a deep conviction of the sacred trust which had been committed into
5 our hands by our divine Master, and, without any subserviency to mortal interests or prejudices, challenging the rigorous scrutiny of his all-searching
6 eye. For that gracious God is our witness, that we never for a moment made his mission an instrument for the gratification of our ambition or our avarice, nor presumed upon it either amongst yourselves, or others, for the promotion of our temporal interests, although, as being Christ's own ministers, we might, had we been so disposed, have reasonably made it a plea for the exercise of some jurisdiction, or the exaction of the maintenance of
7 apostles. Such however was not our line of conduct. On the contrary, as a nurse cherishes her
8 children, and is not fostered by them, so, devoting ourselves to your benefit, we preferred, not only to communicate to you the holy Gospel of our Redeemer, but also gratuitously to expend our strength

and means in your service, as a proof of the sincerity of our attachment. And, accordingly, you 9
cannot but remember the manual labour to which we submitted for that object; working day and night for the procuring of our own livelihood, whilst we were at the same time employed in preaching to you, without expence or burden, the word of divine truth. You cannot also but remember the purity, 10
and correctness, and innocence of our life and conversation, amongst our converts to the faith, how 11
we earnestly exhorted and intreated you, with the anxious affection of parents for their children, all 12
and severally to conduct yourselves worthily of the God who has called you to his worship, and to whose glorious kingdom we all of us hope to be one day admitted.

With these gratifying recollections we cannot 13
but offer our unremitting thanks to God for the success with which he has crowned our exertions, in that you received the word which we preached, not as the words of human wisdom, but as, what it undoubtedly is, the word of that divine Being, whose blessed Spirit works effectually within you for the trial and confirmation of your faith. For 14
with regard to what you have [a] suffered on account

[a] See the account of the violence of the Jews at Thessalonica against the Christian converts, as given in the seventeenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.

of your belief in the Gospel, your lot has been precisely that of the Christian converts amongst my own countrymen, your fellow-citizens having persecuted you for the sake of your opinions, in the same manner as the believing Jews have undergone persecution from the ruling authorities at Jerusalem; from those men who have been from first to last consistent in their uniform hostility to the
15 truth; who crucified the blessed Jesus himself, and put his prophets to death; and who now vent their fury upon us; men, enemies to God, and to the
16 whole human race, their great object at this very moment being to prevent our preaching God's gracious dispensations to the [b] Gentile world, and consequently to hinder the glad tidings of salvation from reaching to other nations:—thus filling up the measure of their sins, and bringing down upon their own heads the summary vengeance of the Almighty which awaits them.

17 Having been necessarily absent from you for some time, (in body only, but never for a moment in my thoughts,) I was extremely anxious to enjoy
18 another opportunity of coming among you: accordingly I (Paul) made more than one attempt to do so, but the difficulties which Satan was able to stir up against me prevented my succeeding in my ob-
19 ject. For what greater hope, or joy, or subject for self-congratulation have I at this moment, than the

[b] See Colossians ii. 1—5.

anticipation that I shall be allowed to present you
one day as my children in the faith to our blessed
Redeemer at his second coming? You are indeed 20
my glory and my joy; and being such, as I found 3
myself unable to continue longer without some
communication with you, and yet was prevented
from visiting you in person, I thought it best to re-
main alone at Athens, and to send our brother 2
Timothy, the minister of God, and my fellow la-
bourer in the service of the Gospel of Christ, to
strengthen you by his exhortations, and to comfort
and establish you in your faith; lest any of you 3
should despond at the intelligence of the persecu-
tions I undergo. For it is necessary that you should
be prepared to expect these afflictions, which in this
life form part of the lot of a Christian apostle.
(You may remember, that when I was last with 4
you, I anticipated and foretold to you the precise
troubles which awaited myself.) Anxious therefore 5
on your account, I took the first possible oppor-
tunity of sending a message to you, and of en-
quiring to what degree your confidence in God's
promises remains unshaken in this moment of trial;
lest perchance the tempter should have availed him-
self of the occasion for shaking your faith, and de-
stroying the fruits of my spiritual labours. Judge 6
accordingly of the gratification I experienced, when
I understood from Timothy upon his return, that
your holy confidence and mutual love and charity
remained precisely what they were, and that your

anxiety to see me was not less earnest than mine to
7 visit you. Great indeed was my consolation in the
midst of my afflictions, in consequence of this happy
intelligence of your persevering faith and trust in
8 God; for be assured that my own griefs can press
but lightly upon me, so long as I feel satisfied that
9 your confidence in Christ remains unshaken. I
cannot therefore too fervently nor too frequently
thank my God on your account, for the great cause
for rejoicing in the success of my endeavours, which
your persevering good conduct has afforded me;
10 and accordingly I now, both by night and by day,
more earnestly than ever desire to see you once
more, and to add by my instructions the last finish,
should such be still wanting, to the completion of
11 your faith and religious knowledge. May God our
Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, enable me to
12 undertake this journey; and may our Redeemer
cause you to increase and abound in that fervent
affection towards one another, and towards all man-
kind, with which I am disposed towards yourselves;
13 that he may finally establish you unblameable in
holiness before our God and Father, at the glorious
second coming of him the Lord Jesus Christ, with
all his holy angels.

4 And now, my brethren, let me finally exhort you,
in the name of the Lord Jesus, that, as you have
received from me directions for a holy life, such as
is pleasing to God, so you will earnestly labour to
your utmost to make yourselves, day after day,

more and more perfect in that necessary work.
You cannot but remember what instructions to that 2
effect I formerly gave you in our Lord's behalf.

In the first place, I stated it as God's special 3
command that you keep yourselves pure in mind
and body, abstaining from fornication; so that each 4
individual among you should learn to preserve the
body which God gave him, in holiness and suitable
respect, not making it, like the unconverted hea- 5
then nations, a mere minister to degrading appetites.

Let no man, in the next place, overreach or 6
defraud his brother in any thing: for, as I have on
former occasions solemnly testified to you, God is
an avenger of all such misdeeds: for he has not 7
called us to a life of unholiness, but to innocence;
that man therefore who sins against these social 8
duties, sins not only against man, but against God
himself, who has planted his Holy Spirit within us to
instruct and strengthen us.

On the subject of brotherly love, and mutual acts 9
of kindness, indeed, I feel that it is superfluous to
address to you any new exhortations; for God has
already given you those affectionate feelings in no
small proportion, as your past conduct has abun-
dantly shewn, not with regard to your more imme-
diate connections only, but by your many acts 10
of [c] beneficence to our brethren through the whole

[c] There will appear something very amiable in this admission by the apostle of the liberality and beneficence

realm of Macedon; all that I will say therefore on this point is,—cherish and improve this disposition to your utmost ability.

11 Frequent not noisy and disputatious assemblages of men, but keep yourselves aloof, attending to your own concerns, and working at your several occupa-
12 tions, as I have already enjoined you; that your heathen neighbours may be led to remark, and to imitate, the decency and propriety of your lives; and also that you may not be guilty of injustice by making yourselves dependent upon others for the necessaries of life.

13 Lastly, my brethren, with regard to our departed friends and relatives who have been called away from the miseries of this life, do not despond, as though their hopes had perished with them, or
14 as though God had forgotten them. For if we know and are well assured that our blessed Saviour died, and rose again from the grave, so we may feel in like manner fully confident that Christ will at his second coming bring back with him all
15 his servants who have died in his faith. For this declaration which I now make to you I received

displayed by the Thessalonians, when we recollect that he himself, as we learn from chap. ii. ver. 9. of this Epistle, had supported himself by his own manual labour, whilst resident in that quarter, in order that he might preach the Gospel to them without occasioning to them any burden or expence.

from our Lord himself, namely, that we [e], who may be still living at that day of Christ's coming, will have no advantage whatever over those who are at this moment in their graves. For our Lord himself 16

[d] This passage affords an illustration of the misapprehension of the real purport of some parts of Scripture, which may be the consequence of a too literal acceptation of a single expression of the writer, instead of arriving at his meaning by the general analogy of his argument. Had the second Epistle to the Thessalonians not come down to us, it cannot be doubted but that the inference which we should have derived from his mode of expressing himself in this place would have been, that St. Paul expected himself to continue in this world until the final day of judgment, or at all events that he conceived that the then existing generation of men would not pass away before the arrival of that awful period. And such in fact was the impression which this passage appears to have made upon the Thessalonians themselves. Of course the impugner of revelation would not in that case have let slip this opportunity of pointing out the apostle's mistake, and of assailing the presumed infallibility of the sacred writings. But the following Epistle entirely does away this misapprehension. There St. Paul expressly declares that it never was his intention to represent the day of judgment as near at hand; on the contrary, he asserts with a peculiar clearness of language, and with a spirit which subsequent history has decidedly shewn to be that of prophecy, that the end was not to be yet, but that vast changes were destined to take place, and many generations to pass away before the fearful day of our Lord's second coming.

will descend from heaven with a shout of triumph,
with the cry of the archangel, and the sound of
God's trumpet; and those who have already died in
17 Christ shall be the first summoned; and afterwards
we, or whoever may be the survivors, will be caught
up together with them into the clouds, to meet our
Lord in the air; and so shall thenceforward reside
18 with the Lord for ever. Wherefore comfort one
5 another with this assurance. But when that awful
day will be, it is not for me to attempt to hazard a
2 conjecture. Yourselves know what were our Sa-
viour's own words on that subject, namely, "that
the coming of the day of the Lord will be as that of
3 a thief in the night," for when men shall be busily
occupied in the midst of their own temporal specula-
tions, and unsuspicious of the fearful hour which
awaits them, then in a moment shall destruction
overtake them, sudden as the pains of labour seize
upon a woman when her time is complete, and there
4 shall be no way for them to escape. But you, my
brethren, live not in darkness, so that you need
dread the approach of Him who will thus come
5 "like the thief in the night." You all are the
children of light and of the day. We live not, like
the votaries of this world, in the night and in dark-
6 ness; let us not then go carelessly to sleep as they
7 do, but let us watch and be sober; for they who
indulge in sleep do so in the night, and they who
revel in drunkenness and riot, do so in the night;
but let us, who live in the light of day, under

the glorious sunshine of the Gospel, let us be vigilant and sober, as in the day; putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and bearing upon our heads the helmet of salvation. For God has not appointed 9
us to abide the effects of his wrath on that awful day, but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake 10
or sleep, we may finally live together with him. Wherefore still continue to comfort and cheer 11
one another, and edify each man his neighbour, with this assurance, as I am satisfied that you have done in time past.

I intreat you moreover, my brethren, to submit 12
yourselves dutifully to the teachers who labour among you, whom the Lord hath set over you for your instruction, and to repay their exertions with 13
that affection which they deserve.

Be at peace also amongst yourselves. Admonish 14
the factious and disorderly. Encourage the feeble minded. Support the weak. Be patient and even tempered to all men. Return not evil for evil, but 15
do good on every opportunity both to one another, and to strangers. Be cheerful minded on all occa- 16
sions. Be in the continual habit of prayer, giving 17 18
God thanks for all his dispensations, be they what they may: for such is the will of God declared to us by Jesus Christ. Quench not the holy sug- 19
gestions of the Spirit. Despise not the opportuni- 20
ties for improvement, afforded by the instruction communicated in your religious assemblies. Give a 21

fair and impartial examination to every thing, and, having done so, hold to and cherish that which you
22 are satisfied is good. Abstain from any equivocal
23 act, which may possibly be evil. And may the great God of peace sanctify you in all points; that you may be preserved pure and blameless both in soul and body till the second coming of our Lord
24 Jesus Christ. Be assured that He who has called you to the mercies of his covenant will not be untrue to his promise, nor disappoint you of your hope.

25 My brethren, remember us in your prayers.
26 Salute all the brethren with a holy kiss. I solemnly
27 enjoin you in the name of the Lord, that you take care that this Epistle be read to all the holy brethren.

28 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

1 PAUL, and Silvanus, and Timothy, to the Church
of Thessalonica, established in the faith of God our
2 Father, and of our Lord Jesus Christ—grace and
peace be unto you from God our Father, and from
the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Thessalonian Church having been led, by a misapprehension of the apostle's meaning in his allusion to the final day of judgment in his former Epistle, to expect our Lord's second coming as an event near at hand, St. Paul appears to have written this second Epistle for the purpose of correcting that mistake, and assuring them that many important changes in the history of mankind were destined to be wrought before the arrival of that period. This discussion leads him into a truly remarkable anticipation of some of the future events which were to occur in the later ages of the Christian Church, which strikingly demonstrate the prophetic spirit of which he was possessed. The Epistle then concludes with an injunction to habits of industry, and the preservation of Church discipline.

3 We are bound to thank God continually for you,
brethren, as is fit, for the daily increase of your
faith, and the exuberant abundance of your love one
4 to another, which have given us just occasion to
boast of you in the several Christian Churches, as
bearing with exemplary patience and faith the many
afflictions and persecutions to which you are sub-
5 ject. Which present afflictions we cannot but con-
sider as manifest pledges of God's ultimate righte-
ousness and justice, and that he thinks you worthy

of that divine inheritance for which you now suffer so much; for, as the violence and cruelty of your 6
persecutors must be expected to reap from his final just retribution that due retaliation of suffering which they now inflict upon you; so by a parity 7
of reasoning we are justified in presuming, that your present afflictions are but preparatory to your reward of eternal happiness, when the Lord Jesus shall return in glory from heaven with his mighty angels, as a flaming fire, to execute vengeance on 8
those who know not God, and are disobedient to the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; and who shall 9
suffer for their unbelief the penalty of eternal destruction, being far removed from his presence[a],

[a] It seems to be implied by this as well as by several other passages of the New Testament, that a considerable portion of the misery awaiting the condemned souls in a future state will consist in their eternal exclusion from the divine presence. Thus in our Lord's parable of the wedding garment, (Matthew xxii. 13.) we find the rejected guest ordered to be bound hand and feet, and to be cast into "outer darkness," τὸ σκότος τὸ ἐξώτερον, that is, to be removed from the guest-chamber and the presence of the Lord of the feast, into a place of melancholy seclusion. If this negative infliction will add so much of bitterness to the positive punishments of those unhappy beings, we must of necessity assent also to the opposite inference, that the admission of the blessed souls to the immediate presence of the Deity will be one grand constituent of the happiness reserved for just men made perfect. It would

10 and from the radiance of his glory; when he shall come to be glorified by his blessed saints, and to receive honour and worship from those who have trusted in him (amongst whom you will be admitted to a place as having professed his faith) on that

undoubtedly be unwise, if not unsafe, to speculate much, with our present very limited faculties, upon this mysterious subject: yet even with our darkened mortal capacities, we can at this moment see enough to be perfectly certain, that the privilege here alluded to must be one calculated to afford to us the most inconceivable degree of felicity. Of all our pleasures in this world, that resulting from the contemplation of the stupendous phenomena of nature is by far the most exciting and the most intellectual. But what is all that the human eye can at present embrace, or all that the human mind can conceive, when compared with the actual immensity of the material universe? And again, what is the mere material universe, when placed in comparison with that moral spiritual creation, which we have every reason to believe to be as really existent as any of the tangible properties of matter?—And yet again, after all, what is even that highest and sublimest portion of created beings, when considered with reference to their Almighty Creator? Our mortal imagination, it is true, will not lend itself to the pursuit of this train of thought, but it is sufficiently palpable to our reasoning faculties to satisfy us how much of literal truth of delineation is conveyed in that scriptural account of the happiness of a future state, which describes it as that which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive."

tremendous day. Wherefore we offer up our 11
prayers continually for you that God would count
you worthy of that glorious summons, and fulfil in
you all the purposes of his grace and love, and
complete within you by his powerful assistance the
workings of your faith. That the name of the 12
Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you
in him, through the mercy of our God, and of the
Lord Jesus Christ.

With regard however to the time of the second 2
coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that day
when the whole human race will be gathered before
his judgment-seat, I beg of you, my brethren, not 2
to be easily excited or alarmed either by any pre-
sumed revelation to that effect, or by any light
report, or by any misapprehension of what I said
in my former Epistle, as though that awful period
were at this moment nigh at hand. Let no man 3
deceive you on this point: as that day will not
arrive until the great apostacy from the pure faith
shall have first taken place, and until that man of
sin foretold by prophecy shall have been mani-
fested: that son of perdition, of whom it is declared 4
that he shall make war against, and elevate himself
above, every one that is called God, and every
thing holy, and who shall intrude himself into God's
place in God's own temple, claiming to himself the
veneration due to God only. Do you not remember 5
that when I was with you on a former occasion, I
explained to you how these things should be? You 6

must recollect how I then told you what are the causes now in operation which prevent for the present the manifestation of that general corruption
7 which will be made palpable in its due season: for the seeds of iniquity are already at work [b], but that

[b] Nothing can be more literally accurate, as every person at all conversant with ecclesiastical history must readily admit, than the whole of this remarkable prophecy respecting the then commencing corruptions of the Christian Church. In looking back upon that enormous mass of error and of human inventions on which the papal power erected its audacious tyranny, we are too apt to consider the whole of it rather as the growth of one short period, and the result of a wilful system of deliberate imposture, than as the slow produce, as it really was, of various concurrent causes spread over a very considerable portion of time. Of those unscriptural abuses which form so large a part of the creed of the Romish Church no inconsiderable quantity had been suggested by the natural tendency of mankind to corrupt the pure truths of revelation, by the admixture of human inventions, at a comparatively early period of Christianity. The ambitious spirit of popery, it is true, subsequently availed itself of them for the extension of its own usurped power, but their first origin may be traced much more frequently to human superstition and ignorance, than to wilful and calculating profligacy. "The seeds of iniquity," says St. Paul in the passage before us, "are already at work:" and so undoubtedly they were; for the morbid activity of false ingenuity from the very first infancy of the Church began to work its way like a canker into the soundness of its doctrines. But, as the apostle proceeds

restraint which the present order of things imposes upon them must be first removed before they can effectually spring up. But the time will come 8
when those checks will be withdrawn, and then shall arise that lawless power, whom the Lord shall one day blow away with the blast of his irresistible breath, and shall quell with the overpowering blaze of his divine presence: that blasphemous and im- 9
pious power, whose coming shall be attended with the working of Satan in power, and signs, and wonders, to give sanction to a lie, and in unrigh- 10
teous deceit for the seduction of the many who will perish, because they have not loved that pure and unadulterated truth which leads to salvation. And 11

to observe, "the restraint which the then existing order of things imposed upon them," that is to say, the subjugation of the Christian converts to the pagan authorities, "prevented their effectually springing up." The subsequent accession of temporal prosperity however at once removed the impediments which had previously opposed the progress of the man of sin. From the time of Constantine downwards the decay of true Christianity was fearfully rapid, and before the expiration of the fourth century the veneration of relics, the sacrifice of the mass for the dead, the Arian and a vast variety of other heresies, with a multitude of accompanying false and absurd legends, had combined to form that accumulation of abuses, so large a portion of which papal enterprize contrived subsequently to consolidate into the materials of the most oppressive usurpation recorded in the annals of mankind.

therefore, because of this their worldly mind, it will be that God will suffer the power of delusion to overtake them, so that they shall rest their faith upon
12 vain fictions; in order that judgment may come upon all who believe not the truth, but who have pleasure in unrighteousness.
13 How much then ought we, my brethren beloved of the Lord, to return thanks to God incessantly on your account, that he has admitted you, from the very first, to salvation through the sanctification of his Holy Spirit, and through your reliance upon
14 his truth, to which he has called you by the means of our ministry, that you might obtain the glory of
15 the inheritance of our Lord Jesus Christ! Stand then firm in this faith, and be strong in your persuasion of the certainty of that revelation which you have received from us, whether by word of mouth,
16 or by letter: and may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and our God and Father who has loved us, and given us his eternal consolation, and a well-
17 founded hope in his grace and mercy, comfort your hearts, and confirm you in all good doctrine and practice.

3 Finally, my brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord which is entrusted to our ministry may spread, and be glorified by the conversion of other
2 nations, as it has been by yours: and that we may be preserved from the violence of unreasonable and wicked men. For all men have not faith in our
3 preaching. Be assured, however, that God will be

true to his covenant, and will strengthen you, who
believe in him, and guard you from the attempts of
your spiritual enemy. We also have ourselves full 4
assurance in you, and in the Lord your protector,
that you will faithfully continue to attend to our
exhortations as in time past. May then that Lord 5
direct your hearts to the love of God, and to the
waiting with patience for Christ's second coming.

We enjoin you also, my brethren, in the name 6
of our Lord Jesus Christ, to keep yourselves aloof
from every brother whose life shall be disorderly,
and inconsistent with the precepts which you have
received from us. For you cannot be ignorant, 7
from the recollection of our own conduct whilst we
were with you, what kind of habits we require in
our followers: you remember that we conformed
ourselves strictly to our own precepts: that we 8
encumbered no man with our gratuitous main-
tenance, but laboured with our own hands by night
and day for the earning of our own livelihood, that
we might not make ourselves chargeable to others;
not indeed that we might not have justly advanced 9
that claim, had we been so disposed; but we pre-
ferred to make our own disinterested conduct an
illustration of our own maxim, which we often en-
forced among you, namely, that "if a man will not 10
work, neither should he eat." For we have been 11
informed, that there are at present certain persons
in your society whose habits are disorderly, and
who do not work themselves, but interfere with,

12 and are an incumbrance to, others. To such therefore we give this positive command in the name and authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, that for the future, living more quietly and industriously, they strive to earn their own bread by their own
13 labour. And may all of you, my brethren, in like manner never be weary in your task of well doing.
14 Should any one refuse obedience to the injunctions contained in this letter, note that man, and shut him out for the present from your society, to
15 bring him to a proper feeling. I do not mean, however, that you should consider him altogether as an alien, but that you should admonish him kindly as a brother.
16 May the Lord of peace give his blessed peace to you at all times, and in all ways. The Lord be with you all.
17 The salutation of me, Paul, is subjoined in my own handwriting. Pay attention to the character, as it is the mark of the genuineness of my Epistles.
18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

THE

FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL

TO

TIMOTHY.

The date of the following Epistle is assigned to various periods. That most commonly received supposes it to have been written about the year of our Lord 64.

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

1 PAUL an apostle of Jesus Christ by the appointment of God our Saviour, and of Jesus Christ
2 the hope of our redemption, to Timothy my own son and convert in the faith—grace, mercy, and peace be from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ.

In this Epistle St. Paul conveys to Timothy, whom he had deputed to superintend the Church at Ephesus, his admonitions respecting ecclesiastical discipline, with directions for the proper selection of the spiritual officers who were to preside over the various departments of the ministry in that community. The whole composition is an admirable specimen of the enlightened good sense and amiable feeling of the writer, and affords also valuable information on the subject of the peculiar form of government adopted by the primitive Church.

3 Upon my departure into Macedon I requested you to remain at Ephesus, that you might have an opportunity of exhorting certain of our brethren
4 to avoid variety and discrepancies of doctrine, and to withdraw their minds from the study of those traditional speculations and endless enquiries into genealogies[a] and fables, which are rather to be

[a] Dr. Macknight and the greater number of commentators upon this passage are of opinion, that the "genealogies"

considered in the light of laborious trifling, than as affording any real help towards our edification, or the establishment of our faith. The end and object 5
of this exhortation was that they should aim in the first place at that Christian charity and good will towards God and man which is the result of a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith; which 6
best qualification of a Christian teacher some persons losing sight of, have turned the force of their minds rather to minute discussions than to practical edification: and have set themselves up for ex- 7
pounders and panegyrists of the law of Moses without possessing any accurate or definite idea what the object of that law was, or of the tendency

here mentioned were those preserved by the Jewish families as proofs of their descent from the original founder of their race. The explanation however given by Hammond appears to me much more satisfactory; namely, that the apostle is here alluding to the mystical speculations of the Gnostics respecting the successive emanations from the divine essence, and the *generation* of the various Æons, or angelic beings, which formed the leading feature of the theology of that sect. According to the former supposition the remonstrance of the apostle is directed only against an harmless, however childish, prejudice; but according to the latter, he is rescuing the pure truths of revelation from that admixture of human philosophy, which, as uniform experience has shewn, is the most dangerous, because the most insidious, auxiliary that true religion can call in to her aid.

8 of their own arguments. I am far from wishing to depreciate the value of the law when considered with reference to the real end for which it was 9 promulgated; but this I would explicitly say of it, "that it was never intended by its author as a rule of positive righteousness, for which it is perfectly incompetent, but solely as a provisional preventive check against moral delinquency;" and accordingly that its aim was not the improvement of the well-disposed, but the correction of the bad; of the lawless and the dissolute; of the irreligious and the sinful, the impious and the profane; the parricide, 10 the murderer, the fornicator, the offender against nature, the man-stealer, the liar, the false and perjured witness, and of every other violater of 11 the laws of God and good morals, the real and effectual promotion of which was reserved for the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, of which I am 12 a minister. And I earnestly thank our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given me strength for the performance of this great work, and counted me a faithful servant in the office with which I have been en- 13 trusted by Him: not charging me with my former offences of blasphemy, and persecution, and violence against his blessed revelation, but shewing mercy towards me, because he knew that I sinned in 14 ignorance and through unbelief; and accordingly, the plentiful fruits of the mercy which I received from him, have by his blessing been on my part an overflowing of faith and holy love towards him for

these his inestimable gifts. This is indeed a true 15
saying, and worthy of the most heartfelt acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I feel that I am the chief. But 16
for this reason I received mercy at his hands, that in me, as a foremost and striking example, might be shewn the immensity of his forbearance, for the future encouragement of all such as hereafter shall turn away from their sins, and repose themselves upon that mercy for the attainment of everlasting life.

Now, to the one almighty, eternal, incorruptible, 17
invisible, all-wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

The delivery of the above exhortation I have 18
entrusted to you, my son Timothy, relying upon the prophetic anticipation entertained by the Church of your future services in the ministry, and feeling satisfied that you will not disappoint that expectation, but will fight the good fight as a soldier of Christ; holding fast your faith in him, and together with 19
your faith an approving conscience, the result of a good life: the necessity of which latter thing some persons [b] overlooking have in consequence made

[b] In his former Epistles, the admonitions of St. Paul have been chiefly directed against the mistake so natural to timid and superstitious minds of aiming at righteousness through the medium of trifling ritual observances, and bodily mortification. His indignation is now called forth

20 shipwreck of the former; such as are Hymenæus
and Alexander, whom I have struck out of the com-
munity of the Church, that they may learn to cease
to blaspheme Christ by supposing that he can be
2 the patron of immorality. I enjoin therefore, in
conformity with the above instructions which I have
given you, in the first place, that prayers, supplica-
tions, intercessions, and thanksgivings be offered up
in your religious assemblies for all men, whatever
2 be their condition; of course not omitting kings,
and all other persons possessing authority; that
under their protection we may be enabled to lead
a quiet and peaceable life in holiness and purity.
I repeat, pray for *all men*, be they who they may,

by another, and far more revolting heresy; that which, misstating the object and effects of our Lord's meritorious atonement, would make that blessed expiatory sacrifice a licence for the unrestrained indulgence of the passions, and a deliberate continuance in sin. Between these opposite extremes of error, into one or other of which religious theorists have in all ages been prone to fall, the written word of revelation points out the only true and secure path. In fact, almost every page of ecclesiastical history is little more than the record of the oscillations of the human mind between these two points, to which the timidity of the feeble minded on the one hand, or the gross conceptions of the fanatical on the other, have invariably deviated the moment that they abandoned that infallible guide in pursuit of the false lights supplied by human speculation, and interested sophistry.

for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God 3
our Saviour, who would have all men whatever to 4
be saved, and to come to the knowledge of his
truth; for we know that there is one God, and one 5
Mediator between God and the whole human race,
namely, Christ; who for that purpose clothed him- 6
self with the human nature, and gave himself a
ransom for all mankind, as he has now declared in
his own good time; of which gracious covenant of 7
redemption I have been appointed his apostle and
minister (I speak the truth in perfect sincerity) to
teach to the Gentile nations the doctrines of faith
and truth. Enjoin them that prayers be offered up 8
for our various fellow creatures by all the brethren
in every fitting place and occasion, holding up pure
hands to heaven, and laying aside all animosities,
with all jealous and partial distinctions.

In the next place, let the women attire themselves 9
in decent apparel, with modesty and reserve, not
with braided air, or gold, or pearls, or expensive
habits, but with that far more becoming orna- 10
ment for Christian women, the attire of good
works.

Let them moreover receive their competent and 11
necessary instruction in silence, and with due
deference; for I permit not a woman to become 12
a teacher, or to usurp authority over a man; on
the contrary, enjoin them to be diffident and silent;
for Adam was formed by the Almighty before Eve; 13
and not Adam but Eve was the person beguiled by 14

the serpent, and the cause of man's transgression.
15 Let us however recollect, that it was promised that the seed of the woman, and not of the man, should bruise the serpent's head, and that therefore through her progeny it is that both the female and the male sex shall eventually be saved, if they live in faith, and Christian love, and holiness, and sobriety.

3 And now let me earnestly remind you, as one to whom I have entrusted the momentous charge of appointing ministers to the Church, that the office of a bishop is one of high and solemn moment, and, when properly filled, of the utmost benefit to those
2 whom he is selected to govern. Let then every person chosen by you to that office be blameless in his life, the husband of one wife, sober, sedate, judicious, hospitable, and competent to instruct
3 others: not a frequenter of riotous banquets, not a brawler, but meek, peaceful, and free from the
4 stain of avarice, a wise director of his own household, and a cautious trainer up of his own children
5 in the habits of order and propriety, (for if he want skill to manage his own children you may safely presume that he will fail in the more difficult charge of governing God's Church,) one of tried and esta-
6 blished character in morals and doctrine, for, if but a novice, he may from want of steady consistency
7 bring scandal npon the Church. In fine, let him be one whom the very heathens would pronounce to

be blameless, that no disgrace or ill name may attach to his ministry.

On the same principle, be careful to choose 8
your [c] deacons from men of grave character, not
double tongued, not addicted to intemperance, not
rapacious after gain; but, on the contrary, uniting 9
soundness of faith, with purity of morals. When 10
you chance to meet with persons apparently such as
I am now describing, in the first place subject
them to an equitable probation, and, should they be
found upon such trial to answer to the character
received of them, then let them be duly received
into the office of deacons. You will also take care 11
that the deaconesses be of grave characters, not
given to slander, sober, and faithful in their trust.
Let the deacons be the husband of one wife, and 12
men who have been found to have been good and
judicious managers of their children and household.
For they who shall have performed this office suita- 13
bly may justly be considered as having earned an
honourable station, and worthy to be entrusted with
the more arduous duties of a minister of the faith of
Christ Jesus.

I have written these things to you, hoping indeed 14
to be able to come to you shortly; but anxious, 15

[c] For the first institution of the office of Deacon, see Acts vi.

should any thing occur to delay me, that you should at all events possess all the necessary instructions for the due management of God's household, I mean the Christian Church, which is the great
16 pillar and support of the true faith: and awful indeed is the mystery of that holiness which is entrusted to its keeping; namely, that "God himself appeared on earth in the human form; that his identity was acknowledged and ratified by the visible operations of the Holy Spirit; that he was seen by the angels; that he was proclaimed as the common Saviour of all nations; that he was believed on by the world which witnessed his coming; and finally that he reascended into eternal glory[d]."

[d] The abrupt introduction and detached character of this passage, verse 16, give it all the appearance of a compressed formula of doctrine, which we can suppose to have been intended by St. Paul for the use of that infant Church, over which Timothy was appointed to preside. According to this supposition, if we admit the commonly received and more probable reading Θεὸς in preference to the ὅς contended for by the Socinians, it will form an epitome of belief consisting of the following articles: first, the divinity and incarnation of Christ: secondly, the separate personality and implied divinity of the Holy Spirit: thirdly, the universality of the offer of redemption to the human race: fourthly, the necessity of faith: fifthly, the reascension of our Saviour into glory, and the consequently implied resurrection of mankind. That he intended this as a

True indeed it is, as I know through the com- 4
munication of the Holy Spirit, that the Church will not always retain in its original purity this simple and sublime doctrine, but that in later times men shall arise who shall turn away from the true faith, giving heed to seducing revelations, and doctrines of devils, through the subtle machinations of false 2
teachers, of men of a seared and hardened conscience, who will forbid matrimony, and make fanciful

model of that kind of confession of belief of things vitally *necessary* which he deemed it expedient that every Christian teacher should require from his disciples appears also probable, from the fact of his contrasting it with that cumbrous and superstitious detail which his gift of prophecy enabled him to foresee that the Church of Rome in after ages would annex to this simple and cogent summary. How completely that anticipation has been subsequently realized every one will be satisfactorily convinced who takes the trouble of casting his eye over the Tridentine creed of Pope Pius IV. The variety of minute speculations with which the successive heresies, which in the course of ages have infested the Church, have perplexed the plain doctrines of primitive Christianity may indeed in our day have rendered more elaborate and detailed forms of confession than that here given by the Apostle useful, if not absolutely necessary. But at all events it is important for us to recollect, that in the innocence of those early times, a believer's faith was considered as sufficiently expressed in his admission of those few but elementary and momentous truths.

and superstitious distinctions between meats, commanding their hearers to abstain from many which God has created, that they might be received and used with gratitude by the believers who worship
4 him in truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing, if received with a grateful disposition,
5 is to be rejected as forbidden; having been sancti-
6 fied by the command of God, and by prayer. Be careful then to inculcate these principles, and you will do your part well as a servant of Jesus Christ, brought up in the knowledge of the true faith, and of that wholesome doctrine in which you have been
7 so carefully grounded. But avoid profane and superstitious fancies, and fictions, making it your great aim to arrive at true and spiritual righteous-
8 ness. For the holiness which is sought after by the maceration of the body is of little avail, but spiritual righteousness is blessed both here and hereafter, having the temperate indulgence of God's good gifts in this world, and the promise of a happy
9 immortality in that which is to come. This is a truth, the importance of which you cannot too
10 earnestly impress upon your hearers: and it is accordingly for inculcating this great fact of our Christian liberty, and of the superior value of spiritual over carnal righteousness, and because I have preached the doctrine, that God is no less the God of the Gentiles than of the Jews, and more particularly the protector of those who repose their hopes on his merits, that I have suffered so many

persecutions and insults from the Jewish authorities.
Be it your care to inculcate and enforce this same 11
doctrine among all your converts.

Give no man a handle to undervalue you on 12
account of your youth; but strive to render yourself an example and model of what a true believer should be by the soundness of your precepts, by the purity of your life, by your charity towards all men, by the fervor of your piety, by the stedfastness of your faith, by the candour of your mind.
Meanwhile, till I come to you, occupy yourself in 13
private study, in public exhortation, and in communicating instruction; nor let those spiritual gifts 14
lie useless, which were conferred upon you, in conformity to God's declared will, by the imposition of the hands of the presbytery. Be earnest then in 15
these holy exercises; and lose no opportunity of acquiring requisite knowledge, that all men may see and confess your proficiency. Be zealous to 16
lead a pure and holy life, and to arrive at the possession of the true and wholesome doctrine, and, having arrived, to persevere in the practice and inculcation of it: for so doing, you will save your own soul, and the souls of your hearers.

Give no unnecessary offence or scandal by harshly 5
rebuking the elders of the Church, but admonish them, when necessary, with the forbearance of a son addressing his father; and in like manner exhort the young with the affectionate earnestness of a brother persuading a brother. By the same rule, 2

address the elder women as mothers, the younger, as your own sisters, with all purity of thought and manner.

3 Treat with respect the widows who derive their maintenance from the contributions of the Church, taking care to admit such only to those appointments, as may from their age and circumstances be
4 best suited to the duties of the situation. I mean such as shall have no children or relatives for whom to provide, or to whom to look. For with regard to those who have families of their own to support, let such be content to perform the peculiar domestic duties resulting from that circumstance, looking after the welfare of their own offspring, and assisting their parents in their infirmity; as in so doing, they will be well performing their duty to God.
5 But the real widows whom I would recommend to you for the service of the Church, I mean, such as have no temporal occupations to distract or call them away from the more direct duties of religion, cannot do better than devote themselves to the service of God, by offering up to him their prayers
6 and supplications by night and by day; whilst those on the contrary who may be in more affluent circumstances will be found little qualified by their habits for that complete oblivion of this world which becomes a person in the situation which I am now
7 describing. Be careful then to mention this my injunction to the brethren, that they make their
8 choice accordingly of persons duly qualified: re-

membering that where relatives exist who are dependent upon ourselves for their support, we can have no excuse for withdrawing ourselves from the performance of an imperative domestic duty, under the plea that we are devoting ourselves to the peculiar service of God: for the desertion of that station in which God has placed us, with all its accompanying obligations, is not only inconsistent with the spirit of Christianity, but even below the usual affection displayed towards their near connexions by the very heathens themselves. Let then 9 the widow whom you may elect into the service of the Church be at all events not under sixty[e] years

[e] One cannot but be strongly impressed whilst perusing this passage with the powerful good sense, as well as good feeling of St. Paul pourtrayed in it. It is not the self-exclusion of devout persons from the turmoil of worldly concerns for the purposes of habitual piety which he deprecates, for such habits may be in their proper time and place as highly rational and as consistent with true religion, as they are for the most part well intentioned. But his insight into human nature had taught him that resolutions of this description formed under the momentary operation of some strong devotional excitement are often ill adapted to the bodily and intellectual temperament of the persons forming them; and that there can be neither true piety nor true wisdom in entangling a reluctant conscience in the responsibility of services, the essential value of which necessarily consists in the willing spirit, and the cheerfulness with which they are performed. Had the Church of

10 of age; having had only one husband; and who shall come to you specially recommended by her good works, such as having brought up her children well; having been hospitable to strangers; having washed the feet of our brethren, having assisted the distressed, and having laudably performed the other
11 commendable duties of life. All women accordingly under the age now mentioned consider as disqualified; lest after having devoted themselves more especially to the service of Christ, they be induced to change their minds, and to engage in a
12 second marriage; and thus be tempted into the sin of violating engagements which they may have entered into from want of a thorough knowledge of
13 their own inclinations: or even, should they not betake themselves a second time to matrimony, lest, at all events, they should want a due steadiness of character, wandering from house to house for the sake of indulging a trifling disposition, and joining
14 in light and frivolous conversation. Instead then

Rome, when she gave her confirmatory sanction to the indissoluble obligation of monastic vows, but seriously weighed the prudential caution of the apostle in the passage before us, from how vast a mass of misery the consequence of ineffectual regret, and of an alarmed conscience reproaching itself with its instinctive but involuntary recollections of a world it had abjured, would she have removed from many a now blighted victim of ill-judging piety, or gloomy superstition!

of perverting a charitable and religious institution, I would rather recommend that the younger widows marry a second time, and have children whom they may bring up properly, than, by undertaking duties for which they are inadequate, give a handle to the ill-disposed to revile our establishment. For al- 15
ready some, by the conduct which I have now described, have given just occasion to scandal.

In cases where any private individuals, male or 16
female, have from charitable motives undertaken the support of a widow, or widows, let them continue to do, without burthening the finances of the Church, in order that it may be better able to provide for such as shall be really destitute and deserving.

Let those elders who perform the work of the 17
ministry in an exemplary manner, particularly those who are zealous in preaching and instructing others, receive a larger provision, in proportion to their deserts: according to the precept of Moses, (Deu- 18
teronomy xxv. 4.) "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn," as also the words of our blessed Saviour himself, (Matthew x. 10. Luke x. 7.) "The labourer is worthy of his hire."

[g] Receive no accusation against an elder, unless 19

[g] This passage, which asserts the authority of Timothy to establish a judicial investigation into the conduct of any accused Elders (Presbyters) of the Church, with the sub-

20 it be substantiated by two or three witnesses; but where an accusation shall be proved to be well-founded, let your reprimand of the offending party be as public as possible, in order that others may be deterred from offending in a like manner.

21 I charge you in the name of God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of those apostles whom he has appointed to rule over his Church, to observe all these directions with perfect impartiality, without prejudice or undue bias.

22 Confer imposition of hands upon no man without due caution, lest by inadvertence you make yourself responsible for another person's misconduct.

Keep watch over your own conduct, and preserve purity of life and conversation.

23 Do not, as I understand you have done, continue to confine yourself to water only at your meals, but drink a little wine for your stomach's sake, and on account of your frequent bodily infirmities.

24 In judging of your candidates for the ministry, you will have no difficulty in deciding upon the unfitness and unworthiness of some applicants; but cases will occur, in which you will be liable to be
25 deceived, unless you exercise much caution: on the other hand, the sufficiency of some will be obvious to you at first sight, whilst that of others will

sequent clause, ver. 22, respecting the conferring of orders, appears perfectly decisive with regard to the existence of the prelatical office in the primitive ages of Christianity.

require some pains to draw it out, before it can be duly appreciated[h].

Let every believing brother who is a slave, pay 6
all becoming honour and respect to the master who has a legal claim to his services, that the name of God and of the Gospel be not calumniated as incompatible with the usages of society: and in cases 2
where the master is himself a Christian, let not the slave on that account relax his attention to his master's interests, on the plea that all Christians[i] are brethren to one another, and equal in the sight

[h] The caution exercised by the primitive Church, in enquiring strictly into the morals of the candidates for the ministry, is evident from the following passage in Lampridius's Life of Alexander Severus. "Ubi aliquos voluisset vel rectores provinciis dare, vel præpositos facere, vel procuratores, id est rationales ordinare, nomina eorum proponebat, hortans populum, ut, si quis quid haberet criminis, probaret manifestis rebus; si non probâsset subiret pœnam capitis: dicebatque, grave esse, cum id Christiani et Judæi facerent in prædicandis sacerdotibus qui ordinandi sunt, non fieri in provinciarum rectoribus, quibus et fortunæ hominum committerentur et capita." *Ælii Lampridii Alexander Severus*, cap. 45.

[i] The admonition here inculcated by the apostle is strikingly characteristic of his deep insight into human nature. How often since his day has the spiritual equality of Christians been advanced by the enthusiastic and fanatical as a plea for insubordination, and an argument for the abolition of the civil distinctions of society!

of God; but let him rather do his duty the more earnestly on that very account, making the tie of mutual love and kindness only another motive to stimulate his industry. Impress this precept to the utmost of your power upon those whom you are called to instruct.

3 If any convert be given to innovate upon the simplicity of the Gospel, and will not submit his understanding to the wholesome and unsophisti-
4 cated doctrine taught by our blessed Saviour, be assured that man is led away by carnal arrogance and conceit from the search of true knowledge, and is making the word of life a mere instrument for idle speculations and controversies, and thus sowing the seeds of jealousies, dissensions, railings, uncha-
5 ritable surmises, and of all those sophistical fallacies by which worldly men attempt to harden their hearts against the chidings of conscience, and to make the holy cause of religion compatible with their own selfish interests. Of such persons be-
6 ware. Compatible with our real interests even in this life religion undoubtedly is; it is not however by making us rich, but in giving us that contented
7 disposition which is equivalent with riches. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain
8 that we can carry nothing out; wherefore, provided
9 we have food and covering, let that suffice. In aiming beyond this, and in seeking to be rich, men fall of their own accord into temptation and a snare, blinding their understandings, and fostering those

evil passions which eventually plunge all who give way to them into the abyss of perdition. For ava- 10
rice is the root of all evil; rendering the hearts of those who are its slaves callous to all the feelings of faith and piety, and embittering their whole existence with anxiety and sorrow. Fly, chosen servant 11
of God, I beseech you, fly from these wretched and base passions; and let your great and earnest endeavour be the attainment of righteousness, piety, faith, charity, patience, meekness: fight the good 12
fight of faith: lay hold of, and cling to, that hope of eternal life to which God has called you, and the blessed doctrine of which you have gloriously asserted in the presence of so many witnesses. Do 13
this, I solemnly adjure you in the name, and as you shall one day stand in the sight, of God the Giver of life; continue to bear your fearless testimony to the truth, as your great Master Christ Jesus himself has done before you, who so unhesitatingly answered to the interrogations of Pilate: that our 14
gracious Redeemer may find you faithful to the last, without stain or reproach, at his glorious second coming, when in his own good time he shall re- 15
appear as the blessed and only Mighty One, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, the great eternal 16
Being, who makes his abode in that inaccessible blaze of light and glory, which man has not seen, nor can see. To Him be honour and eternal dominion. Amen.

Remind those who are rich in this world's trea- 17

sure, that they place not their confidence and hopes on those uncertain possessions; but on the mercies of the living God, who gives us all things abun-
18 dantly for our innocent enjoyment: and exhort them to be zealous after good works, making themselves rich in the fruits of a good life, ready to distribute to others, and compassionate to the neces-
19 sitous; that so they may lay up for themselves a good treasure for the world to come, and may attain to everlasting life.

20 O Timothy, keep the doctrine which is entrusted to your ministry in simplicity and purity, avoiding profane and trifling innovations, and the vain super-
21 additions of carnal philosophy, which some of our brethren having adopted, have corrupted the word of God, and fallen away from the faith. Grace be with you. Amen.

THE

SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL

TO

TIMOTHY.

THE following Epistle, the last of those attributed to St. Paul, is supposed to have been written a short time previous to his martyrdom, in the year of our Lord 65.

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

1 PAUL an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of
God, according to the promise of eternal life in
2 Christ Jesus, to my beloved child Timothy—grace,
mercy, and peace be from God the Father, and
from our Lord Jesus Christ.

We have here the valedictory and affecting exhortations of the dying Paul, ready, as he expresses it, to be offered up for the service of his Redeemer, to his favourite disciple Timothy, on the subject of the duties of a Christian minister. The Epistle presents a beautiful and striking picture of the same unshrinking energy of character, the same simplicity of feelings, and the same sincerity of belief, which marks the former writings of the apostle, wound up by the prospect of approaching dissolution to a degree of joyful confidence in the mercies of his Creator, which more than realize our most sanguine conceptions of that beatitude which might be expected to attend the closing career of an expiring saint. The whole composition is however as completely devoid of every symptom of enthusiasm and of morbid excitement, as it is abundant in topics of edification, from which every class of human beings may derive substantial benefit.

3 I thank my God, the God of my forefathers,
whom I serve with a pure conscience, making in-
cessant mention of you in my prayers by night and
4 by day, (for I cannot forget the tears which you
shed when with me on a former occasion, nor re-
strain the anxious longing which I feel to see you
5 once more,) when I call to mind your sincere faith
in the Gospel; a faith which shone conspicuously

in your grandmother Loïs, and in your mother Eunice, and which, I am confident, exists in no less degree in yourself. Wherefore I the more ear- 6
nestly intreat you to stir up and keep alive that spiritual gift of God which dwells within you, through the imposition of my hands; for that precious gift 7
was not communicated that it might lie dormant through timidity, but that it might operate by miracles, and works of Christian charity, and well-regulated zeal. Be not then ashamed to bear wit- 8
ness to the name of our Redeemer, nor to acknowledge me who am now a prisoner on account of his Gospel; but bear cheerfully your share in the afflictions which await those who are called to the ministry, looking up to the protection and support of that God who calls us to salvation by his holy sum- 9
mons, not on account of our own merits, but from his own gracious purpose and mercy, which was prepared for us, through Christ Jesus, before the commencement of time; and which has been re- 10
vealed in our days by the coming of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who has stripped death of its power, and brought life and immortality to light through his Gospel: of which I have been appointed by him 11
a teacher, and an apostle, and an instructor of the Gentiles: and for the sake of which I now suffer 12
persecution. I am not however ashamed or dismayed on that account: for I know in whom I have trusted, and I am well assured that he is able to guard the treasure which I have deposited

in his keeping until the great day of his second coming.

13 Hold fast then, I beseech you, that form of sound and wholesome doctrine which you derived from my instructions, with that firmness of conviction and earnestness of zeal which become a follower of
14 Christ; guarding that sacred deposit by the aid of that Holy Spirit which God has been pleased to communicate to us.

15 You have of course heard that our Asiatic converts, including Phygellus and Hermogenes, have turned away from me.

16 May the Lord have mercy on the family of Onesiphorus; for he often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of me, although a prisoner in fetters;
17 but upon his arrival in Rome made an eager search
18 after me, and came to me. May the Lord grant that he may find mercy from our Saviour in the day of his second coming. You had before heard of his many kindnesses towards me when I was in Ephesus.

2 Be then, my son, strong in the grace which has
2 been given to you in Christ Jesus, being careful to commit as a sacred deposit to faithful and sincere men those great truths which were communicated to you through my instructions, and which have been attested and authenticated by so many witnesses, in order that they may in their turn transmit them
3 to others for the information of future ages. Conduct yourself as a good soldier of Christ, and shrink
4 not from the hardships of his service; recollecting

that it is the part of a good soldier to bid adieu to the entanglements of civil and domestic concerns, and to attend exclusively to that obedience which he owes to his superior officer. Recollect also, that 5 in the public games, no champion can win the prize unless he conform to all the prescribed conditions of the day; and that in agriculture no husbandman 6 can hope to gather in the harvest, unless he have first undergone the labour and expence of tillage. Let 7 these and similar reflections sink deep in your thoughts; and may our Lord give you a right apprehension of all things. Forget not for a single 8 moment the first great article and foundation of that faith which I so earnestly preach; namely, that Jesus Christ, verily and actually clothed with our human nature, and a descendant from the lineage of David, has been raised again from the dead: a faith 9 for the teaching of which I am at this moment lying a prisoner in fetters. But what of that? my limbs may be chained, and my body imprisoned; but the word of God notwithstanding spreads, yea, and will spread. Therefore I submit with 10 patience to these temporary afflictions for the sake of God's people, that they also may obtain salvation through Jesus Christ, and an inheritance of eternal glory. Be assured, this is no vain and delusive 11 expectation. If we are now content to die with him, we shall all of us assuredly one day live also with him: if we now submit patiently to affliction 12 for his sake, we shall also hereafter reign trium-

phantly with him; but then let us not on the other hand forget how solemnly we have been warned by him, that "if we deny him, he will also deny us when he shall return in his glory," (Matt. x. 33.)
13 We may in our perversity turn a deaf ear to him, and disbelieve his report of himself: but it will not be therefore one tittle the less true: he at least cannot deny himself, nor be false to his own positive declarations.
14 Let this then be the sum and substance of your exhortations; nor omit to charge your hearers, in the name of our blessed Saviour, to avoid captious disputations on these mysterious subjects, the effect of which will too probably be the destruction of
15 both their faith, and their charity. Be on your guard also with respect to the purity of your own doctrine, not shewing yourself ashamed of God's holy Gospel, but delivering the word of truth plain
16 and unadulterated; without any admixture of human glosses and interpretations, which will serve only as a door for the admission of antichristian
17 principles, and eat, like a canker, into the very vital doctrines of our faith. Witness for instance
18 the case of Hymenæus and Philetus, who have set up their own speculations in opposition to the truth, and have asserted, to the misleading of some, that
19 the resurrection is already past. But the fundamental hopes of the true believer are not to be thus easily overthrown; on the contrary, they stand firm in the security of God's promises, bearing for their

legend and inscription the words spoken by Moses on the occasion of the rebellion of Korah, "The Lord knoweth them that are his;" and again, "[a] Let every one who nameth the name of Christ depart from among these wicked men," (Numbers xvi. 5, 26.) But we know that in every great house not 20
every vessel is of gold or silver, but some are of baser materials, such as wood and earthenware; the former for honourable, the latter for meaner uses. Let a man then keep himself pure from these cor- 21
rupt doctrines, and he shall be in the Lord's house as one of the honourable vessels, *clean*, and fit for his master's use, and for every good and seemly purpose.

Let me also put you upon your guard against 22
the indiscretion and impetuosity natural to youth, in the administration of your very momentous office. Strive therefore the more earnestly on that account to attain the great Christian virtues of holiness, faith, charity, and forbearance, and to display them on

[a] This allusion to the judgments inflicted upon Korah and his associates shews with what severity of reprehension when necessary St. Paul was disposed to consider every heretical innovation upon the sound doctrines of the Gospel. Notwithstanding the peculiar and almost unparalleled benignity of his character, the sacred cause of scriptural truth is never for a moment compromised by him for the sake of a mistaken liberality or of unwarranted conciliation.

all occasions in your intercourse with the pure and
23 sincere followers of Christ; discouraging always
every tendency to vain and unprofitable enquiries
into matters which have not been revealed, the only
result of which must be conflicting opinions, and
24 embittered passions. It is not by such discordant
instruments that the servant of Christ can hope to
do his Master's work. On the contrary, he can only
labour profitably by shewing himself gentle to all
men, willing to impart instruction; not easily pro-
25 voked, but rather expostulating meekly with the
wayward opinions of the arrogant and self-conceited,
in the hope that God may bring them to a better
26 mind, and that they may awake from the intoxicat-
ing delusions with which Satan has bewildered their
judgments, that they might become his slaves.
3 Nor will this caution on your part be superfluous;
for be assured that, from the causes now alluded to,
corruptions will in the course of ages most abun-
dantly creep into God's Church; when Christian
2 simplicity and charity will be lost amid the collision
of worldly feelings, and men shall become selfish,
covetous, arrogant, contemptuous, calumniators,
3 disobedient to parents, ungrateful, irreligious, inca-
pable of the kindly and social affections, faithless,
stirrers of strife, slaves to their passions, harsh, dead
4 to the perception of what is good, betrayers, head-
strong, insolent, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers
5 of God, professing the external forms of piety, but
uninfluenced by its internal sentiment. All such

persons do your utmost to discourage, for such 6
there are already in operation, men who creep from
house to house, misleading weak women who cling
to their sins, and are slaves to their own unsub-
dued passions, and who make religion rather a sub- 7
ject for the indulgence of a meddling curiosity, than
an instrument of spiritual righteousness. As it is 8
related of Jannes [g] and Jambres, Pharaoh's juggling
magicians, that they withstood Moses, so do these
men set up their own sophisticated feelings and
hardened imaginations against the cause of truth.
But they shall not finally succeed in their endea- 9
vours: but, as the two impostors just now men-
tioned stood convicted in the presence of their
master, so shall the delusions of these false teachers
be eventually exposed in the face of all men.

For the present, however, be prepared for per- 10
secution. You have witnessed the latter circum-
stances of my life in all its details; my persever-
ance in preaching, my disciplined habits, my fixed
resolution, my implicit faith, my equable temper,
my affection for all men, my patience; and you 11
know how all these have been put to the test by
persecutions and afflictions; what I suffered at
Antioch, what at Iconium, what at Lystra: how

[g] The names of Jannes and Jambres not being recorded in the narrative of the book of Genesis, St. Paul must be here alluding to some Jewish tradition which has not come down to our time.

my course has been one of suffering for the cause of truth, and how my God has carried me un-
12 scathed through it all. And be assured, that all men, who are zealous to live holily and conformably to the religion of Christ, must make their account to suffer persecution as I have done; or rather let
13 me say, more than I have done; for the wickedness and seductions of mankind have not yet reached their limit, but men as time advances shall grow worse and worse, deceiving and deceived.
14 Again then, let me intreat you, be firm, nor abandon one particle of that holy doctrine which you have embraced, and with the ministry of which you have been entrusted, recollecting the authentic source
15 from which you first received it: and that it has been your good fortune to have imbibed from your very infancy the knowledge of those holy Scriptures which, if rightly understood, are able to make you wise unto salvation, and to bring you to the faith
16 of Christ. For all those Scriptures which the Jews acknowledge were imparted by God's own inspiration, that from them we might derive wholesome instruction, sound argument, a knowledge of God's ways, and that preparatory discipline which termi-
17 nates in effectual righteousness, that the servant of God may be perfect in fulness of instruction, and fitted for a career of complete happiness.

4 I solemnly call upon you then, in the name of God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the living and the dead at his second coming in the

plenitude of his power and glory, preach, impress, 2
enforce, in season or out of season, the glad tidings
of salvation; refute the false reasoner; rebuke the
evil liver; call and encourage all men, bearing
with their waywardness, and administering whole-
some instruction. For it will not be always that 3
they will hear you. The time will come when they
will no longer endure the simplicity of the Gospel,
but, according to their own passions and caprices
will heap teacher upon teacher, speculation upon
speculation [h], having their ears itching after novelty,

[h] This passage conveys a truly important admonition to Christian teachers of every period, and more especially to those of our own times. When we recollect through what a mass of heterogeneous speculation, through what intricacies of false learning, the product of eighteen centuries of too frequently misapplied ingenuity, the modern theologian has to explore his way back to the simple truths and feelings of primitive Christianity;—how many lures of controversial display, of feverish intellectual excitement, of momentary interest, cooperate to turn his attention rather to the incidental questions, or the metaphysical enigmas of religion, than to the great and vital dogmas of man's natural helplessness, of Christ's efficacious atonement, and of sanctification by the Holy Spirit, we cannot but acknowledge that few of the apostolical injunctions require to be more frequently sounded in the ears of those persons to whose superintendence the souls of others are intrusted, than the one before us. Far be it indeed from any well-wisher to pure Christianity to deprecate the application of

4 and turning away from the plain truth to hunt after
5 the excitements of fiction. Be then cool, temperate,

controversial divinity in its proper season, and under a justifying emergency. St. Paul himself is, in many portions of his writings, an instance with what inflexible energy of mind the most subdued and gentle character may, and ought to, harden itself for the exercise of polemical discussion, when to decline the combat would be to abandon to our adversary the holy cause of eternal truth. Still however we should never lose sight of the fact, that real Christianity is rather a moral feeling than a science; that controversial discussion is only an offensive, however occasionally necessary, weapon in the armoury of religion, and not religion itself; and that, as in our bodies disorders are often aggravated by the irritation produced by the remedies intended for their cure, so the angry feelings thus excited will often do more to confirm rival differences of opinion, than any arguments which we can advance will be able to effect for their extinction. Controversy, like warfare between nations, is indeed the final appeal to which we must necessarily have recourse, when other preventive and more pacific measures fail; but the necessity of the former no less than of the latter may not unfrequently be averted, without the slightest compromise of the justice of our cause, by that conciliatory spirit, the natural tendency of which is to incline our adversary to reconsider his arguments, not so much for the purpose of pointing them afresh, as from a suspicion that they may have been overstated, and from a misgiving lest, whilst he intended nothing more than to advocate his just rights, he should be found to have been himself the original aggressor. In a note appended to Philippians iii. 15. a wise practical maxim of

and cautious; not turned away by provocation from the right course, but, doing faithfully the work of an evangelist, perform with anxious attention all the various duties of your ministry. For my as- 6
sistance in this holy cause, I feel that you can no longer look. My vial is now nearly exhausted of its contents, and the time of my liberation is at hand. I have fought a good fight; I have won the 7
race which was set before me; I have maintained my faith unshaken to the last; and now my reward awaits me. Henceforth there is laid up for me a 8
crown of righteousness, which the Lord my righteous Judge shall give me on the great day of his coming; and not to me only, but to all those who

St. Paul on this subject has been already alluded to, which substantially differs little from that which has suggested these observations, and which no person sincerely labouring in the duties of the ministry can lay too near to his heart; namely, that an incessant and earnest inculcation of the fundamental truths of revelation will operate far more powerfully as an incidental check to the growth of false opinions on remoter points, than the direct refutation of them. Nor, on the other hand, is the danger slight, lest, by the indulgence of a disputatious spirit upon questions of inferior, not to say trivial, interest, we should to a certain degree invert the scale of their relative importance, and check the due recurrence of our thoughts to those primary and momentous truths which constitute the very essence of Christianity.

look forward to that his glorious reappearance with hope and affection.

9 Come to me with all speed: for Demas has left
10 me, having attached himself to this present life, and is gone to Thessalonica, Crescens to Galatia, Titus
11 to Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Bring Mark with you, for he is an able assistant to me in the
12 ministry. Tychichus I have sent to Ephesus.
13 Bring with you, when you come, the cloak which I left at Troas with Carpus, and also the books,
14 but particularly the parchments[1]. Alexander the coppersmith did me much mischief: the Lord re-
15 pay him according to his works: be you also on your guard against him, for he has been a violent opposer of our preaching.

16 None of our brethren had the fortitude to attend me at my first defence before the emperor, but all forsook me. I pray that God may not lay it to
17 their charge. The Lord however was my aid and support, in order that my public declaration of the tidings of salvation on that occasion might be widely heard, and that the heathens might have an opportunity of turning to the faith. And though

[1] It has been suggested as a not improbable conjecture, that the cloak and parchments, respecting which the apostle gives this commission to Timothy, were the Roman toga, and the certificates of his citizenship, which might be of service to him in his approaching trial before the emperor.

I spoke with boldness, his mercy delivered me out of the lion's mouth; and I feel assured that he will 18
continue to protect me, so that nothing evil shall finally gain advantage over me, but that he will receive me into his glorious kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the household of 19
Onesiphorus. Erastus remained behind at Corinth. 20
Trophimus I left sick at Miletus. Join me if pos- 21
sible before the winter. Eubulus, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren salute you. 22
The Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.

THE

EPISTLE OF PAUL

TO

TITUS.



THE Epistle to Titus is supposed to have been written about the same time with the first to Timothy: that is to say, about the year of our Lord 64, after the close of Paul's first imprisonment at Rome. No account being given in the book of the Acts of that apostle's visit to Crete alluded to in this Epistle, that journey must necessarily be supposed to have taken place after the period at which that narrative ends, namely, after his arrival in Rome for the first time, in which city it is well known that he continued to reside for the space of two years before he was again set at liberty.

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

1 PAUL the servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus
Christ for the propagation of the faith of God's
2 chosen people, and of the knowledge of truth and
3 holiness, in the hope of that everlasting life which
our God, who cannot lie, promised before the commencement of time; and who has in his due season declared his word by the mouth of his preachers, to which ministry I have been appointed by the com-
4 mand of God our Saviour, to Titus my own son and convert in our common faith—grace, mercy, and peace be from God our Father, and from our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The object of this Epistle is nearly the same with that of the first addressed to Timothy, namely to convey the apostle's instructions to his friend and disciple Titus, whom he had left behind him in Crete, respecting the selection of proper persons for the Christian ministry, and the due regulation of Church discipline. It also refers to the so often denounced error of the Judaizing Christians, whose doctrines appear to have gained a footing in that island.

5 My object in leaving you in Crete, was in order
that every thing which had been left unsettled by
me there might be finally arranged, and that you
might ordain elders in every city according to the
6 directions which I gave you: choosing for that office

men of unblemished character, each of them the husband of only one wife, having their children brought up in the faith of Christ, and in orderly and correct discipline. For it is quite necessary 7 that a person filling the station of a bishop[a] should

[a] The word "Bishop," in this as in the parallel passage in 1 Timothy iii. 1. appears to have been used by St. Paul as synonymous with that of "elder" or "presbyter," and from this circumstance the presbyterian Churches have attempted to derive an argument in favour of that peculiar form of government established in their communities. This however is not a mere controversy about names. The real point at issue between our Church and those formed upon the presbyterian model is, whether any real distinction of rank and office did actually exist among the ministers of the Christian congregations established by the apostles themselves. Now this question appears to be satisfactorily answered by the fact, that both Timothy and Titus are expressly declared to have had power to ordain bishops or presbyters to the ministry according to their own discretion, and also to sit in judgment upon such as should have been accused of any misdemeanor in the exercise of their office. Milton in his "Reasons against Prelacy" has attempted to destroy the force of this argument by asserting, that the power possessed by Timothy and Titus was nothing more than the delegated authority of the apostle Paul acting through them as his deputies, and consequently that it could afford no precedent for the establishment of a similar jurisdiction after the expiration of the apostolical age. This assertion however proves too much, as, if admitted, it would be good, not against pre-

be of blameless morals, as being the steward of God's mysteries, not self-willed, not irritable, not given to intemperance, not violent, not avaricious,
8 but on the contrary hospitable, delighting in the society of the well-disposed, judicious, just, devout,
9 temperate, holding firmly the true word of revelation, that by it he may be able both to edify his hearers by sound instruction, and to refute his
10 impugners by forcible argument. For many false teachers and corrupters of the Gospel doctrine have crept into the Cretan Church, particularly of that class who would enforce the necessity of circumci-
11 sion as conducive to salvation, whose arguments it is highly expedient to silence; for they have succeeded in perverting the faith of whole families, engrafting human speculations upon the word of God, as a source of worldly profit to themselves.
12 But such has ever been the character of the Cretans as a nation, whom one of their own poets has accurately described in the well known verse,

'The false, rapacious, sluggish sons of Crete.'

13 And such they continue to be at this moment. Wherefore admonish them in severe terms, that

lacy only, but against every other branch of church discipline established by the apostles, and which, under the sanction of their authority, has formed part of the permanent usages of the Christian world in later times.

they may learn to submit to the truth as they find it revealed in God's word, and not garbled and 14
adulterated by the admixture of Levitical traditions and lying legends. To the pure in heart all things 15
are pure; but to the perverted and selfish mind, on the contrary, the best and holiest things, even conscience and reason themselves, become an abomination. And thus with the blessed name of God on 16
their lips they virtually deny him in their works, giving themselves up to licentiousness, and disobedience, and every species of corruption.

In a country where so many errors and abuses 2
require correction, be it your anxious endeavour to preach to the best of your power the wholesome corrective of sound religion and morals, dwelling upon and enforcing the following topics.

That the elder men be sober in their demeanour, 2
decorous, steady, firm in their faith, abundant in Christian love and kindness, and patient under afflictions.

That the elder women be in their conduct such 3
as becomes the holy religion they profess, not tale-bearers, nor addicted to intemperance, but being an example to others for their good life and conversation: that from them the younger women may learn 4
to love their husbands and children, to be discreet, 5
chaste, domestic, affectionate, and obedient to their husbands, that the Gospel which they profess to believe may not be evil-spoken of.

Exhort the young men also to practise moral 6

7 restraint; and, that they may be induced to do so, make yourself an example and model of good works, and let your instructions be conceived in a spirit of
8 purity, gravity, and sincerity, and your expressions so tempered by judgment and caution, that your adversaries may neither in the matter or manner find a handle for censure or ridicule.

9 Enjoin servants to be obedient to their respective masters, conducting themselves with deference, and
10 avoiding rudeness and contumacy of manner; not pilfering or defrauding, but shewing themselves faithful and honest in all things; that the doctrine of God our Saviour may derive credit from their irreproachable behaviour.

11 For the saving mercy of God has in these latter
12 days shone forth upon all men, teaching us to renounce ungodliness and all worldly appetites, and to live soberly, and honestly, and piously in this
13 our present life, waiting for that blessed consummation of our hope, the glorious second coming of our
14 great God and Saviour Jesus Christ: who gave himself to death for our sakes, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar
15 people studious of good works. These things speak and exhort: rebuking, where needful, with the authority of a minister of Christ. Let no man despise you or your words.

3 Remind them also of the deference which they owe to persons in authority and power, that they may be ready to shew their obedience to them in

every thing consistent with the laws of conscience.
To avoid defamation and quarrels, and to be meek
and gentle in all their dealings with all mankind.
For we ourselves, before we had learned the know- 3
ledge of Christ, were like them headstrong, disobe-
dient, loose livers, the slaves of appetite and plea-
sure, living in hatred and malice, bearing jealousy
and animosity against one another. But when it 4
pleased God our Saviour to display his goodness
and love for mankind, he communicated his salva-
tion to us not on account of any righteous deeds 5
which we had done, but from his own pure and
undeserved mercy, by the washing of regeneration,
and the renewal of our heart by the assistance of
the Holy Spirit, which he poured abundantly upon 6
us, through Jesus Christ our Saviour, that being 7
justified and acquitted by his mercy, we might
become heirs to the hope of everlasting life. This 8
then is a true and important maxim which you
cannot too earnestly enforce, that a good moral
life ought to be the anxious endeavour of all persons
professing a belief in God. Such precepts are
honourable to the religion which enjoins them, and
salutary to mankind whose welfare they directly
promote: but not so are the idle and captious 9
arguments, and[b] genealogical speculations, and fu-
tile distinctions between Jew and Gentile, which
serve but to irritate the passions and to promote

[b] See 1 Timothy i. 4.

strife and ill will. Such accordingly avoid as vain
10 and unprofitable. If in spite of your better instruc-
tions, any member of the Church continue to foment
heresy by such indulgence in human speculations,
after a second formal admonition exclude such an
11 one from the society of the Church; as in that case
he can only be considered in the light of a person
of a corrupt mind who deliberately sins against his
better knowledge.

12 When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, make
what haste you can to meet me at Nicopolis, for
13 there I have determined to pass the winter. Supply
Zenas the lawyer and Apollos with every thing
necessary for their journey, that they feel no priva-
14 tion. And let all our brethren learn to practise
some honourable calling for the supply of their
wants, that they may not be a burthen upon others.
15 All who are here with me salute you. Salute from
me all my Christian well-wishers.

The grace of God be with you all. Amen.

It has been observed, that, whilst St. Paul has in his Epistle to Timothy particularly cautioned that disciple against any injudicious display of impetuosity and eagerness of temper in the exercise of his office, he has not urged the same prudential admonition to Titus whilst delegating to him a similar authority; from whence it has been inferred, that the latter was probably a person of a

milder temper, and consequently less likely to offend on the side of that peculiar species of indiscretion. In accordance with this supposition we may observe, that the second Epistle to Timothy affords us a painful ground for conjecturing, that however numerous in other respects may have been the excellences of Titus's character, firmness and moral courage were not the most prominent of them. "Come to me with all speed," says the apostle in that moment of his temporal affliction, "for Demas has left me, having attached himself to this present life, and is gone to Thessalonica, Crescens to Galatia, *Titus* to Dalmatia." This juxtaposition of his name with that of Demas undoubtedly appears to involve him in some degree in the censure attaching to the tergiversation of the former. Of both we may however venture to hope, that their fault was rather the consequence of momentary infirmity than of deliberate ingratitude, and that, like the repentant disciples of their divine Master, they subsequently expiated their short-lived desertion by the sincerity of their contrition, and by their increased zeal in the execution of the duties of their ministry.

THE

EPISTLE OF PAUL

TO

PHILEMON.

The following Epistle appears to have been written towards the conclusion of St. Paul's first imprisonment at Rome, and must therefore have its date assigned late in the year of our Lord 62, or early in 63.

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

1 PAUL, a prisoner in the cause of Jesus Christ, and
Timothy our brother, to our beloved and fellow-
2 labourer Philemon, and to our beloved Apphia, and
to Archippus our fellow-soldier, and to the congre-
3 gation of believers in your house—grace be to you
and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord
Jesus Christ.

The object of the apostle in addressing this Letter to Philemon is of a private and domestic nature. Onesimus, a slave of the latter person, having fled from his master's service, and taken refuge in Rome, had by some accident become acquainted with St. Paul, at that time a prisoner in that city, and had by him been converted to Christianity. Being now desirous of returning to his master, but being at the same time apprehensive of the punishment which might await him as the consequence of his past misconduct, he applied to that apostle to mediate for him for the purpose of obtaining his pardon. The following Epistle was accordingly written in conformity with this request, and affords a beautiful specimen of the urbanity of St. Paul's manners as an accomplished member of society, no less than of the natural liberality and benevolence of his feelings.

4 I sincerely thank God in my continual remem-
5 brance of you in my prayers, for all that I have
heard of your love and faith toward our Lord Jesus
Christ, as manifested in your kindness to his holy
6 servants; earnestly trusting that your participation
in our common belief may become effectual by

leading you to exercise before all men those many good dispositions which you feel towards Christ Jesus, and the members of his Church. For we 7
have all of us great cause for self-congratulation and comfort in witnessing your Christian kindness, and your many acts of beneficence, my beloved brother, to our necessitous converts: and under that 8
conviction, though I might, as bearing Christ's commission, address you in the way of command, I have preferred to make my appeal to your gra- 9
tuitous good will and generosity under a no higher character than that of the aged individual Paul, now a prisoner in chains for the sake of the blessed Gospel.

Let me then intreat you to shew compassion to 10
Onesimus, one whom during my captivity I have succeeded in converting to our faith, whom, unpro- 11
fitable as his service has been to you thus far, you will, I trust, now that he is brought to a better mind and to a knowledge of the true God, find a good and an altered character. I have therefore ven- 12
tured to send him back to you. Receive him then kindly, I beseech you, and consider yourself in so doing to be shewing substantial kindness to myself. I should indeed have been glad to have retained him 13
with me in Rome for some longer time, in order that he might during my imprisonment afford me those services which I am sure you would gladly supply in your own person were you here: I did 14
not however venture to do so without your consent,

especially as I wished such a favour to originate from yourself, and not to be extorted from you by
15 any act of mine. May I also venture to suggest with regard to his late flight from you, "may not that event have been permitted by Providence, in order that, by the means of conversion which it has so fortunately afforded him, you might, by sustaining a short privation of his temporal services, at-
16 tach him to yourself for all eternity, not as a slave, but as something better, a beloved brother, dear to me, but much more to you from your long knowledge of him, and now also from his participating with you in the covenant of Christ?"
17 In the name then of our intimacy of affection, I intreat you to receive him with as much kindness
18 as that with which you would receive myself: and, if you have suffered any loss or injury by him, to
19 consider me as your debtor to that amount. In order that you may be warranted in requiring the compensation from myself, be it what it may, I write this clause specially with my own hand, as a full acknowledgment of the debt: though perhaps I might remind you that you owe me much more than any thing which I may be indebted to you on this account, as it was from me that you derived
20 your own conversion to the Gospel. Yes, my brother, grant me this favour in Christ's name. Afford
21 me this comfort for the Lord's sake. I have written this request with a full conviction of your ready kindness, and that you would willingly bestow upon

me a greater favour than that which I now solicit.
Let me also avail myself of the present opportunity 22
to beg of you to provide me with a lodging, for I
trust that your prayers for my release have been
heard, and that I shall shortly be allowed to visit
you.

Epaphras, my fellow-prisoner for the cause of 23
Christ, with Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, 24
my fellow-labourers in the ministry, salute you.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your 25
spirit. Amen.

In the Epistle to Philemon we have a striking proof how perfectly compatible are the noblest principles of practical Christianity with that elegance and amenity of character which form the great charm of polished society. Few of the epistolary remains of classical antiquity surpass it in beauty of composition or in grace of expression, yet the spirit which it breathes is that of the simplicity of a saint combined with the dignity of an apostle. It is however not a little remarkable, that the subject of the letter involves a very delicate topic for the discussion of a Christian teacher, namely, the right of one human being to the compulsory services of another. In 1 Corinthians vii. 21. St. Paul has already incidentally expressed his own private disapprobation of an usage so inconsistent with the principles of natural justice and of Christian liberty; and yet, both in that passage and in 1 Timothy vi. 2. he appears to consider it rather as an abuse which the then established order of society had rendered necessary, than as an abo-

mination requiring at all events and at any price to be inexorably rooted up. It has already been observed in a former note, that Christianity rather trusted to the slow but sure amelioration resulting from the gradual adoption of better and holier principles of morals for the correction of what was amiss in ancient manners, than proposed any new and violent remedies, the operation of which could only have led to political convulsions and domestic misery. We can perfectly understand how, in the apostolic age, many a sincere believer in the Gospel may have found himself implicated in the responsibility attaching to the possession of a numerous household of domestic slaves, under circumstances which might render it impossible for him as a citizen, or even as a just and good man, to effect their complete manumission. In that case it became the necessary duty of an apostle, anxious rather for the promotion of substantial good, than for shewy and plausible systems of reform, to tolerate what neither himself nor the party addressed had the power to prevent; remembering however always to inculcate meanwhile such merciful principles upon the persons possessed of this dangerous and easily abused authority, as, whilst the external form of the evil was allowed to continue, might effectually remove from it all liability to practical injustice or cruelty. From the feeling manner, accordingly, in which this perplexing topic is discussed in the Epistle before us, one truly important lesson is, at all events, to be derived; namely, with what liberality of charitable candour a Christian may hold his communings with society in his passage through a world, many of whose usages he disapproves, yet where no necessary reason exists for attributing improper motives to the particular individuals whose conduct may accidentally differ from his own. In expostulating with deliberate and calculating vice, the protest of a Christian minister cannot

perhaps be too explicitly declared; but a vast multitude of cases may, and do, undoubtedly exist, in which a candid and pious temper will suggest much to palliate what our first impulse might incline us to disapprove, where a sterner, though intrinsically less pure, system of philosophy would find only the materials for angry declamation and uncompromising censure.

THE

EPISTLE OF PAUL

TO THE

HEBREWS.

THE date of this Epistle is marked by the valedictory address, chap. xiii. 24. and must therefore be referred to the latter end of A. D. 62, or the beginning of 63, when St. Paul's first imprisonment at Rome was nearly terminated.

The object of the Epistle to the Hebrews is to prove to the Christian converts of that nation, and incidentally also to all who acknowledge the divine inspiration of the books of the Old Testament, the reality of the mission, and the divine nature of our blessed Saviour, from arguments derived exclusively from the peculiar lights afforded by those writings. The tendency of the apostle's reasoning is therefore to shew, that no Jew who really believes in the authority of his own sacred books could, if he reason consistently, and be content to adopt all the inferences necessarily deducible from those premises, ultimately refuse his assent to the truth of the Christian dispensation, or fail of perceiving that in the person of our Redeemer all the types and prophecies of the Jewish writings had effectually found their final completion. In order to perceive the extreme closeness and beauty of the argument thus managed, it is necessary therefore that the reader should keep in his mind that St. Paul addresses himself to *Jews only;* to persons acknowledging no literature, no authoritative code of doctrine or formula of belief whatever, excepting the ancient books of the Law and the Prophets; and accordingly that proofs of our Saviour's mission derived from other sources, however satisfactory they might be to others, would have been to them at least out of place. The following dissertation is in short what the logicians call an "argumentum ad hominem," in which the point at issue is established by an appeal to those very peculiar opinions and principles which the parties to be convinced have, above all others, the most imperative obligation to admit.

1 GOD, who at various times and in various manners spoke in days of old to our fathers by the
2 prophets, has in these latter days spoken to us by his Son, whom he has made heir of all things,
3 (and by whom he made the world,) who, (being an effulgence of his divine glory, and an impress of

his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power,) having made by himself an expiation for our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high ; as much surpassing the angels in the es- 4
sential dignity of his nature, as the name which he has inherited is preeminent above theirs.

For to which of the angels has God said at any 5
time, "Thou art my *Son*, this day have I begotten thee?" (Psalm ii. 7.) and again, "I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a *Son*." (2 Sam. viii. 14.) And again, when prophetically alluding to 6
the second glorious coming of that Son into the world, "Let all the angels of God worship him." (Psalm xcvii. 7.) Of the angels themselves he 7
merely says, "Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire;" (Psalm civ. 4.) but to the 8
Son he says, "Thy throne, O God[a], is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved holiness and hated iniquity; wherefore God, thine own God, hath 9
anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." (Psalm xlv. 6.) And again, "Thou, Lord, 10
in the beginning laidest the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thine hands.

[a] It appears to be scarcely within the power of language to assert the divine nature of our blessed Saviour in more express terms than in those of the two passages of the book of Psalms here quoted by the apostle.

11 They shall perish, but thou remainest for ever:
12 they all shall grow old as does a garment, and as a
mantle thou shalt fold them up, and they shall be
changed; but thou continuest the same, and thy
13 years shall not fail." (Psalm cii. 25.) To which
again of the angels has he said at any time, "Sit
thou on my right hand, until I shall have made
14 thine enemies thy footstool?" (Psalm xc. 1.) on the
contrary, are they not mere ministering spirits, ap-
pointed to attend upon such of the human [b] race as
shall inherit salvation?

2 If then such be the awful dignity of the Son of
God, the more earnestly in like proportion ought we
to pay attention to his holy commands, lest we should
2 fall away in our obedience from them. For if the
covenant which God made with the Israelites through
the intervention of [c] angels was so solemnly sanc-
tioned by himself, that every incidental transgression
of its precepts and every occasional act of disobe-
3 dience received its just retribution from God, how
shall we hope to escape the divine justice if we
despise the covenant of salvation offered to our
acceptance by the glorious Son of God himself?
a covenant which having been first promulgated to
mankind by our Lord's own mouth, has been con-

[b] This passage seems to sanction the doctrine of guardian angels.

[c] See Galatians iii. 9.

firmed to ourselves by the testimony of his own disciples who heard him; and ratified by God's 4
direct interposition, in the display of signs, and wonders, and various miracles, and by the communication of the gifts of the Holy Spirit from time to time according to his divine pleasure? For it is not to the mere ministering angels that he 5
has committed the jurisdiction of the world to come, of which that blessed covenant promises us the fruition, as is evident from the following in- 6
spired passage. "What is man that thou art mindful of him, or the Son of man that thou regardest him? Thou hast made him a small degree lower 7
than the angels; and yet thou hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou hast placed *all things* 8
under his feet." (Psalm viii. 4.[d]) Now if he has

[d] The primary and more obvious meaning of the passage in the eighth Psalm here referred to appears to assert nothing more than the supremacy of man's present nature over the inferior races of animals which inhabit our globe. "Thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen; yea, and all the beasts of the field." The application of it in a prophetic sense to the supreme dominion of our Redeemer over all created beings in heaven and earth is certainly not one which would naturally suggest itself to us, or which we should venture to adopt as probable, had we not the warrant of inspired Scripture for so doing. I have made this observation on the present occasion for the purpose of pointing out an evidence which this quota-

placed *all things* under him, it is evident that there is nothing whatever, however great and dignified, which is not put under him. But as yet we do not see all things placed under him, and consequently that latter part of the prophecy as yet awaits its consummation: but the former part of it we ourselves have already seen
9 consummated. We *have* seen Jesus Christ made a little inferior to the angels, by taking upon himself the human nature, and we have also seen him, after his passage through the grave, crowned with glory and honour: that, by God's mercy toward us, he might taste of death for the redemption of all

tion affords of the authenticity of the Epistle to the Hebrews as written by St. Paul; a fact which, as every biblical scholar is aware, has been occasionally controverted. It seems scarcely probable that it could have occurred to *two different* writers to cite the same text for the self-same purpose with an interpretation annexed to it so widely different from that which would present itself to common readers; yet in 1 Cor. xv. 25. also it is expressly referred to by St. Paul as confirmatory of the universal sovereignty of Christ. That this secondary application of the passage is a correct one we are of course bound to admit; but, as I have just now observed, it suggests an argument which is much more likely to occur twice to the same individual whilst discussing the same subject, than to have been advanced a second time with perfect identity of allusion by some other person writing under the influence of his own intellectual associations, and peculiar modes of thought.

mankind. For it accorded with the character of 10
that mighty Being who called us and all things into
existence, and for whom we and they exist, whilst
preparing the way for us his sons to ascend into
glory, to make also the great Leader of our salvation
perfect through human sufferings; for he the sanc- 11
tifier, and we the sanctified, are all the children of
the one Almighty God; for which reason he is not
ashamed to call us his brothers; as we read, (Psalm 12
xxii. 22.) "I will declare thy name to *my brethren;*
in the midst of the Church will I sing praise unto
thee." And again, (Isaiah viii. 17, 18.) "I will 13
wait upon the Lord that hideth his face from the
house of Jacob, and I will look for him, I, and the
children whom the Lord hath given me." As then 14
those children whom he came to redeem were of
human flesh and blood, he himself condescended,
for their sake, to assume the same nature with
them, in order that by submitting to death he might
destroy the power of the lord of death, namely, the
devil; and might release from the apprehensions 15
connected with the thoughts of death all who till
that time had been subject to those slavish terrors.
Let us observe also, that he did not assume, as he 16
might have done, the nature of *angels*, for the pur-
pose of procuring our salvation, but that of a human
son of Abraham. From whence we infer that he 17
deemed it expedient to be made like unto us his
brethren in all points, that he might become a mer-
ciful and faithful High Priest to offer expiation for

18 our sins to God; and accordingly, inasmuch as he has borne the same infirmities and temptations with ourselves, we are confident that he knows how to feel for and to assist us his brethren in these our present trials.

3 Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of this heavenly calling, consider this mighty apostle and high priest 2 of our faith, even Jesus, who has in his person been thus faithful to Him who appointed him to that office, as it was also on a former occasion pronounced of Moses, (Numbers xii. 7.) "that *he* was 3 found faithful in God's house." And yet the faithfulness of Christ as far exceeds that of Moses, as the [c] builder of a house exceeds in dignity the house 4 which he builds: for as every house must have had a builder, so God is the great builder of all things 5 which exist. The faithfulness of Moses in the house of God consisted also in his performing the part of a servant to prepare the way for the coming 6 of a better covenant: but Christ came, not as a servant *in*, but as the heir presiding *over*, the house: which house, we the members of his Church are, if we will hold fast unto the end that joyful confidence and hope which we derive from his promises.

7 Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost declares, (Psalm 8 xcvii. 7.) "*To-day* if you will hear his voice harden

[c] We have here another direct assertion of the divinity of our blessed Saviour.

not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day
of temptation in the wilderness, when your fathers 9
tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty
years. Wherefore I was grieved with that genera- 10
tion, and said, They always err in their heart, they
have not known my ways: wherefore I swore in 11
my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest." Take 12
heed therefore, brethren, lest there should be in any
of you an evil heart of unbelief, leading you to turn
away from the call of the living God: but exhort 13
one another daily, whilst it is called *to-day*, lest the
heart of any of you should become finally hardened
by the deceitfulness of sin: for we are members of 14
the body of Christ, if we perseveringly maintain our
confidence in him unshaken from the beginning to
the very end. Recollect then that the words of 15
Scripture are, "*To-day* if you will hear his voice,
harden not your hearts, as in the provocation."
For some, we know, when they *had* heard his voice, 16
provoked him: (not indeed that all did so who
came out of Egypt under the guidance of Moses:)
with which of them then was he grieved forty 17
years? was it not with the disobedient, who after-
wards perished in the wilderness? And to whom 18
again did he swear that they should not enter into
his rest? was it not to them who disbelieved his
word? Why then were they unable to enter in? 19
Assuredly because of their unbelief.

Let us then take warning by this example of our 4
disobedient forefathers, and cherish a salutary fear

lest any of ourselves also should, through want of faith and obedience, fail, as they did, of entering into that rest which he has been graciously pleased
2 to promise to us. For we have indeed received our promise, as they received theirs; yet the promulgation of the Jewish covenant with all its promised blessings did not avail them, not being accompanied with faith on their part to make the promise of ef-
3 fect. Therefore, by a parity of reasoning, all we who will believe in his faithfulness, *and such only as will believe*, shall enter into his blessed rest. "I sware in my wrath, said he, that *they* shall not enter into my rest."

Now the question is, "What is that rest from which he has declared that the disobedient are excluded?" For God's works were finished, we are told, from the time of the completion of the creation
4 of the world; and accordingly God declared (Gen. ii. 3.) of the seventh day, that "on that day he
5 rested from his works." And yet we find him subsequently declaring of our forefathers, that "they should not in time to come enter into his rest;"
6 from whence it is evident, that some, to whom the covenant was preached, should enter in, and that others should be excluded in consequence of their
7 disobedience. Then again *the time* in which this declaration was made requires observation. It was made, we know, at so late a period as that of the prophet David. "*To-day*," says the Psalmist, "if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts."

And yet undoubtedly, if the entrance of our fore- 8
fathers into the promised land under the guidance
of Joshua[f] had been the completion of the promise
that they should enter into God's rest, it were per-
fectly inconsistent that David, at a period so much
subsequent in time to that of Joshua, should speak
of that day in which he lived as *the* day for shewing
their obedience, and of God's rest as a thing yet ex-
isting only *in expectation*. It is evident therefore from 9
the foregoing passages, that the promised rest of the
people of God is yet to be accomplished; for then 10
only can a man be said to enter into his rest, when
he ceases from his labours; as it is said of God,
that he rested after the creation of the universe was
completed. What then is the necessary inference? 11
that if the promised rest to God's people is still a
thing *in futurity*, we should continue to use our
utmost endeavours to attain to it, lest, after the
example of our forefathers, we also forfeit the be-
nefit of the divine promise through our disobe-
dience. For the blessed covenant of the Gospel is 12

[f] It is unfortunate that the composers of our authorized translation should have made use of the name "Jesus" in this passage as the appellation of the leader of the Jews into the promised land, instead of the more usual and familiar word "Joshua." It is true that the names are identical in Greek, but to an unlearned English reader the consequence is, that the meaning of the apostle in this place is unintelligible, and liable to misconstruction.

endued with an active and searching influence; it is not a thing which can be lightly deemed of, but is sharper than a two-edged sword, penetrating into the very centre of the soul, and of its most secret thoughts; exploring the whole interior of man's nature, and detecting every feeling and apprehen-
13 sion of the heart. There is no portion of the creation which the eye of our great Master does not penetrate, and all we, like animals severed, opened, and disjointed, lie exposed to his inevitable scrutiny.
14 Having then the blessed Jesus himself, the very Son of God, now returned to his eternal glory, as our great High Priest to officiate for us, and to introduce us into the possession of these covenanted mercies, let us abide firmly by the profession of this
15 faith: for our High Priest, all-powerful as he is, is not one who cannot sympathize with our infirmities; on the contrary, as I have already observed, he has submitted to undergo all the very trials which we ourselves are subject to, with this only difference, that in his passage through this world he escaped
16 the taint of sin. With such a Mediator to make intercession for us, let us then approach boldly to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy,
5 and find grace in the time of need. Now the office of an high priest is, we know, that to which a person is appointed, whose duty it shall be to offer to God gifts and sacrificatory expiations for sin in
2 the behalf of the congregation; and accordingly he ought to be one possessed of those sympathies for

others, and that knowledge of human nature, as to be able to understand and enter into the various natures of their infirmities and wants; inasmuch as 3 it appertains to his office to be the intercessor with God, not for his own sins only, but for those of all others with whose spiritual welfare he is entrusted. We know also that functions of this high character 4 cannot be vested in any individual by merely human authority, but that he must receive the efficiency of his appointment from God, as was the case with respect to the first Levitical high priest Aaron. And accordingly in like manner we find that Christ 5 did not appoint himself to the character of our spiritual High Priest, but received his authority for undertaking that office from Him who declared of him, "Thou art my Son: this day have I begotten thee." Which divine appointment of him to that 6 office we find again asserted in another Psalm, (Psalm cx. 4.) "The Lord sware, and will not repent: Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." And accordingly we know respect- 7 ing him, that, during the period of his abode upon earth, he offered up prayers and supplications [g] with strong crying and tears to him who was able to

[g] This is probably an allusion to our Saviour's agony in the garden on the eve of the crucifixion; and another of the many instances in which reference is made by St. Paul to the narrative contained in the Gospels as they have descended to us.

save him from death, and was rescued in conse-
8 quence from its terrors: and, although bearing the high rank of the Son of God himself, yet that he condescended for our sake to be obedient to the
9 discipline of affliction, and thus, qualifying himself to appear before his Father as the High Priest to make intercession for the whole human race, has become the author and means of eternal salvation
10 to all those who are obedient to him: being acknowledged by God himself to be "an High Priest according to the order of Melchisedec."

11 With regard to the meaning of this expression, and why Christ is designated as a High Priest *after the order of Melchisedec*, much might be said to shew the justice of the comparison, from what is related in Scripture of that last-mentioned personage; but such mysterious speculations would be hard for you to understand. For you have shewn yourselves slow in your apprehension of religious
12 knowledge, and, although you might ere this have been qualified to instruct others, have yet to learn the very rudiments of the oracles of God, and require even now rather the milk of infants than the
13 strong food of adults. But it is not for children not yet weaned from the milk of infancy to comprehend
14 the deeper mysteries of wisdom: by the more advanced and mature only can the stronger meat be used with advantage, when their awakened perceptions and judgment shall have enabled them to distinguish between good and evil; between what is

wholesome, and what pernicious. Let me then lead 6
you on from the mere elementary propositions on
which our holy religion is founded, and which every
beginner in Christianity is necessarily presumed to
have apprehended, to the investigation of some of
those deeper conclusions, to which it is now full
time that you should begin to turn your attention.
It can be no longer necessary for me to demonstrate
to you that the mere ritual expiations of the law of
works can never lead to effectual righteousness, nor
to require your assent afresh to the great primary
truth of Christ's covenant, namely, that we can be
saved by a reposing confidence in his redemption
only. Nor need I dwell on the necessity of bap- 2
tism to you who have already submitted to receive
it; nor on the commission given by our Redeemer
to us his apostles, to communicate the gifts of the
Holy Spirit by the imposition of our hands; nor on
our confident assurance of the certainty of a future
resurrection from the grave, and of a judgment to
come. It shall therefore be my endeavour, with 3
God's blessing, to conduct you onwards from these
elementary principles to some of the more remote
truths of our holy religion, not stopping to examine
you in those which I have just now enumerated,
and which no one can for a moment hesitate in
accepting without abjuring the very name of Chris-
tian, and falling back into the most hopeless and
incurable hardness of unbelief. For no case of un- 4
belief can perhaps be imagined to be more desperate

than that of a person, who, having once advanced thus far; who having already felt from his own internal consciousness the inefficacy of ritual works, and the consequent necessity of a divine atonement for sin; who having submitted from conscientious conviction to the purifying rite of baptism; who having prayed for and received the blessed gifts of
5 the Holy Spirit; and who having looked forward in hope to a glorious resurrection from the dead, and
6 to the final retribution of the future judgment, shall have afterwards hardened his heart afresh, and thrown himself back into that spiritual obduracy and darkness from which he had emerged. In the mind of such a person repentance itself has no soil in which to take root; he has deliberately crucified again that Saviour in whom he had professed to believe, and contemptuously rejected that holiness
7 of which he had tasted. It is the fertile and not the barren soil which God loves to cultivate, and in which to plant his seed; that which drinks in the rain, and clothes itself with a wholesome vegeta-
8 tion; but the stony and parched soil, which brings forth only thorns and briars, is worse than unpro-
9 fitable, and fit only to be burnt as stubble. Imagine not, my beloved friends, that I am now intending to describe your case: on the contrary, though I may blame the slowness of your progress, I am perfectly satisfied of the soundness of your faith in the fundamental principles of the doctrine of salva-
10 tion now alluded to; nor is God so unmindful of

those who are anxious to perform his will, as to disregard labours of Christian love such as yours, which have been, and are, so unremittingly displayed by you in your various acts of benevolence towards his disciples and servants. All therefore 11
which I am desirous of is, to lead you on still further; to make your present zeal consistent to the end, and to render your future progress in religious knowledge conformable to the real soundness of its commencement; that you may not be slothful, but 12
may be successful imitators of those who through faith and persevering obedience have finally inherited the promises of God's covenant. Such was 13
the case of our great forefather Abraham, to whom God, having given a promise, because he could swear by no greater being, sware by himself, saying, 14
"Surely in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thee;" (Genesis xxii. 17.) and he, waiting patiently for the fulfilment of the 15
promise, finally obtained it. Men, we know, on 16
solemn occasions swear by something greater than themselves, as the most impressive guarantee they can give to assure others of their sincerity; and in 17
like manner, God on that occasion, in order to shew mankind the certainty of his immoveable purpose to bring them to salvation, confirmed the promise made to Abraham by an oath; that, in these 18
two undoubted pledges which it was quite impossible that God would violate, we might have a sure consolation in which to take refuge, and a hope of ul- 19

timate redemption to which we might confidently cling, as to the soul's firm and sure anchor fixed within the mysterious veil of the temple, that is to
20 say, the unknown world, into which Jesus our forerunner has already entered, there for ever to officiate for us as an High Priest after the order of Melchisedec.

7 The following coincidences between what is related of Melchisedec in the book of Genesis and the peculiar character of our Saviour's spiritual priesthood will shew, that the former personage has been not inappositely declared by the Psalmist in the passage just quoted to be a type and symbolical forerunner of the latter. This Melchisedec was, we are told, the king of Salem, and priest of the most high God, who met Abraham upon his return from the
2 slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; to whom Abraham gave a tenth part of all the spoils. (Genesis xiv. 18.) Now in the first place I would observe, that the name "Melchisedec" signifies when interpreted "king of righteousness;" then again he was also "king of Salem," which latter word signifies "peace." and consequently he bore another of our blessed Saviour's titles, namely, "the Prince of
3 peace;" In the book of Genesis also no mention whatever is made of his father, of his mother, of his genealogy, of the commencement of his life, nor of his death, and in these respects also he may therefore be considered as representing typically the

divine nature, the self-existence, and the twofold eternity, past and future, of Christ our own immortal High Priest. In the next place we may 4
observe what preeminent rank is attributed to this personage in the Old Testament, inasmuch as he is described as receiving a tenth part of the spoils from so illustrious a character as the patriarch Abraham himself. Now the descendants of Levi, 5
to which tribe the Jewish priesthood is exclusively annexed, have the right of demanding tithes from the *whole* of the Jewish people, though they themselves being of the stock of Abraham cannot of course be supposed to be superior in dignity to that their renowned ancestor. But Melchisedec, a per- 6
son of a totally distinct race, marked his own superior authority *by taking tithes of Abraham himself, and by pronouncing a blessing even upon that man to whom God himself had made the promise that he himself should be a blessing.* Now it is self-evident, 7
that he who is competent to pronounce a blessing upon another is the *superior* of the person whom he blesses. Again, according to the law of Moses the 8
priests who receive the tithes are mortal men like those who pay them: but I have already shewn that Melchisedec as described in the book of Genesis typically represents a Being without beginning or end. We may also observe, that in a certain sense 9
Levi himself, whose descendants receive tithes from others, paid them to Melchisedec; for not being 10

yet in existence when Abraham paid tithes to Melchisedec, he may be said to have[b] himself paid
11 them in the person of his ancestor Abraham. Let me ask you also, "if perfect holiness can be attained under the Levitical priesthood, through which only Moses taught our forefathers to seek after it, why should David, when describing a priesthood of a superlatively preeminent character, have designated it as after the order of *Melchisedec* rather than as
12 after the order of Aaron?" For we must recollect, that in acknowledging a valid priesthood *out of the family of Levi*, to which latter family the law of Moses exclusively annexes it, David is expressly pronouncing judgment *against* the validity of that

[b] Should some parts of the apostle's reasoning with respect to this parallel drawn by him between the person of Melchisedec and that of our blessed Saviour appear to dwell upon seemingly trifling coincidences of facts, we should recollect that it was from that very circumstance admirably well adapted for the convincing of the parties to whom it was specially addressed. The commentaries of the Rabbinical writers upon their own sacred books were, as is well known, almost uniformly of this minute, and as to the eye of modern criticism it may appear over ingenious, character; not merely the general phraseology of any passage under review, but the collocation of the words, and even the number of syllables contained in them, being sometimes made the subject of elaborate discussion, and adduced by them in confirmation of the most fanciful conclusions.

And yet undoubtedly, if the entrance of our fore- 8
fathers into the promised land under the guidance
of Joshua[f] had been the completion of the promise
that they should enter into God's rest, it were per-
fectly inconsistent that David, at a period so much
subsequent in time to that of Joshua, should speak
of that day in which he lived as *the* day for shewing
their obedience, and of God's rest as a thing yet ex-
isting only *in expectation*. It is evident therefore from 9
the foregoing passages, that the promised rest of the
people of God is yet to be accomplished; for then 10
only can a man be said to enter into his rest, when
he ceases from his labours; as it is said of God,
that he rested after the creation of the universe was
completed. What then is the necessary inference? 11
that if the promised rest to God's people is still a
thing *in futurity*, we should continue to use our
utmost endeavours to attain to it, lest, after the
example of our forefathers, we also forfeit the be-
nefit of the divine promise through our disobe-
dience. For the blessed covenant of the Gospel is 12

[f] It is unfortunate that the composers of our authorized translation should have made use of the name "Jesus" in this passage as the appellation of the leader of the Jews into the promised land, instead of the more usual and familiar word "Joshua." It is true that the names are identical in Greek, but to an unlearned English reader the consequence is, that the meaning of the apostle in this place is unintelligible, and liable to misconstruction.

yet in existence when Abraham paid tithes to Melchisedec, he may be said to have[b] himself paid
11 them in the person of his ancestor Abraham. Let me ask you also, "if perfect holiness can be attained under the Levitical priesthood, through which only Moses taught our forefathers to seek after it, why should David, when describing a priesthood of a superlatively preeminent character, have designated it as after the order of *Melchisedec* rather than as
12 after the order of Aaron?" For we must recollect, that in acknowledging a valid priesthood *out of the family of Levi*, to which latter family the law of Moses exclusively annexes it, David is expressly pronouncing judgment *against* the validity of that

[b] Should some parts of the apostle's reasoning with respect to this parallel drawn by him between the person of Melchisedec and that of our blessed Saviour appear to dwell upon seemingly trifling coincidences of facts, we should recollect that it was from that very circumstance admirably well adapted for the convincing of the parties to whom it was specially addressed. The commentaries of the Rabbinical writers upon their own sacred books were, as is well known, almost uniformly of this minute, and as to the eye of modern criticism it may appear over ingenious, character; not merely the general phraseology of any passage under review, but the collocation of the words, and even the number of syllables contained in them, being sometimes made the subject of elaborate discussion, and adduced by them in confirmation of the most fanciful conclusions.

others, and that knowledge of human nature, as to be able to understand and enter into the various natures of their infirmities and wants; inasmuch as 3 it appertains to his office to be the intercessor with God, not for his own sins only, but for those of all others with whose spiritual welfare he is entrusted. We know also that functions of this high character 4 cannot be vested in any individual by merely human authority, but that he must receive the efficiency of his appointment from God, as was the case with respect to the first Levitical high priest Aaron. And accordingly in like manner we find that Christ 5 did not appoint himself to the character of our spiritual High Priest, but received his authority for undertaking that office from Him who declared of him, "Thou art my Son: this day have I begotten thee." Which divine appointment of him to that 6 office we find again asserted in another Psalm, (Psalm cx. 4.) "The Lord sware, and will not repent: Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." And accordingly we know respect- 7 ing him, that, during the period of his abode upon earth, he offered up prayers and supplications [g] with strong crying and tears to him who was able to

[g] This is probably an allusion to our Saviour's agony in the garden on the eve of the crucifixion; and another of the many instances in which reference is made by St. Paul to the narrative contained in the Gospels as they have descended to us.

save him from death, and was rescued in conse-
8 quence from its terrors: and, although bearing the
high rank of the Son of God himself, yet that he
condescended for our sake to be obedient to the
9 discipline of affliction, and thus, qualifying himself
to appear before his Father as the High Priest to
make intercession for the whole human race, has
become the author and means of eternal salvation
10 to all those who are obedient to him: being ac-
knowledged by God himself to be "an High Priest
according to the order of Melchisedec."

11 With regard to the meaning of this expression,
and why Christ is designated as a High Priest *after
the order of Melchisedec*, much might be said to
shew the justice of the comparison, from what is
related in Scripture of that last-mentioned person-
age; but such mysterious speculations would be
hard for you to understand. For you have shewn
yourselves slow in your apprehension of religious
12 knowledge, and, although you might ere this have
been qualified to instruct others, have yet to learn
the very rudiments of the oracles of God, and re-
quire even now rather the milk of infants than the
13 strong food of adults. But it is not for children not
yet weaned from the milk of infancy to comprehend
14 the deeper mysteries of wisdom: by the more ad-
vanced and mature only can the stronger meat be
used with advantage, when their awakened percep-
tions and judgment shall have enabled them to dis-
tinguish between good and evil; between what is

from the fact, that he was disqualified by the Mosaic institutions from holding the earthly office, from the circumstance of his not belonging to the family of Levi, to whose tribe that dignity is inseparably annexed. We may observe also that the Levitical 5
priesthood is confessedly a type and symbol [1] of the heavenly one, as is evident from the command given to Moses respecting the construction of the tabernacle, (Exod. xxv. 40.) "See that thou make all things *according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount:*" which last mentioned heavenly office 6
being exercised by our blessed Redeemer, we may confidently assert that he is the Mediator of a covenant as far surpassing in excellence the one established with our forefathers, as the spiritual promises contained in the Gospel exceed the temporal blessings, to which alone Moses has encouraged his countrymen to aspire. For if the first covenant 7
had been perfect, most certainly there would have been no occasion for the second. But we find the 8
Almighty himself declaring the insufficiency of the former; (Jeremiah xxxi. 31.) "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a *new* covenant with the house of Israel, and with the

[1] Josephus expressly asserts, that the Levitical tabernacle with its furniture, and the dresses of the high priest, were designed by Moses as a representation of the universe. See his Antiquities of the Jews, lib. iii. cap. 7.

9 house of Judah; *not according to the covenant that I made with their forefathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt*, because they continued not in my covenant,
10 and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws in their minds, and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall
11 be to me a people. And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me,
12 from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and
13 iniquities will I remember no more." If then we cannot but conclude from this passage that God intended the establishment of what he terms a *new* covenant, it is obvious that he also at the same time purposed the cancelling and abrogating of that which, as opposed to the former, we must denominate the *old*.

9 This former and less perfect covenant had however, by God's own appointment, its peculiar ordinances of divine worship, and its earthly holy of holies, a type, as I have observed, of the heavenly
2 and invisible one. For the command given to Moses was that he should construct in the first place what is called the holy outward tabernacle, in which were to be preserved the candlestick, and
3 the tabernacle, and the shew bread; and within the

wholesome, and what pernicious. Let me then lead 6
you on from the mere elementary propositions on
which our holy religion is founded, and which every
beginner in Christianity is necessarily presumed to
have apprehended, to the investigation of some of
those deeper conclusions, to which it is now full
time that you should begin to turn your attention.
It can be no longer necessary for me to demonstrate
to you that the mere ritual expiations of the law of
works can never lead to effectual righteousness, nor
to require your assent afresh to the great primary
truth of Christ's covenant, namely, that we can be
saved by a reposing confidence in his redemption
only. Nor need I dwell on the necessity of bap- 2
tism to you who have already submitted to receive
it; nor on the commission given by our Redeemer
to us his apostles, to communicate the gifts of the
Holy Spirit by the imposition of our hands; nor on
our confident assurance of the certainty of a future
resurrection from the grave, and of a judgment to
come. It shall therefore be my endeavour, with his
God's blessing, to conduct you onwards from these
elementary principles to some of the more remote
truths of our holy religion, not stopping to examine
you in those which I have just now enumerated,
and which no one can for a moment hesitate in
accepting without abjuring the very name of Chris-
tian, and falling back into the most hopeless and
incurable hardness of unbelief. For no
belief can perhaps be imagined to

every year, not without shedding of blood, which he offers for his own sins of ignorance and for those of the
8 people: the Holy Spirit signifying by this emblematical ceremony, *that mankind were to be excluded from God's inmost sanctuary, so long as the first*
9 *tabernacle should continue to exist.* All which form of worship was entirely symbolical, and established as a provisional intermediate arrangement; to enable men to offer gifts and sacrifices which had no natural tendency to purify and expiate the
10 worshipper, consisting as they did in regulations respecting meats and drinks, and ablutions, and ceremonies which had reference to the body only, but which meanwhile were to be sanctioned by divine authority, until superseded by the establish-
11 ment of a covenant of spiritual holiness. But Christ having in the fulness of time appeared upon earth as the High Priest of that righteousness which shall hereafter be perfected, and having passed onward through a greater and holier tabernacle than mere human hands could construct, (of course far exceeding that devoted to the purposes of the Levi-
12 tical worship,) and not carrying with him the blood of goats or of calves, but the precious sacrifice of his own blessed blood, has entered *once and for ever* into the heavenly holy of holies, having offered for us one great and sufficient expiation
13 *which never will require repetition.* And if even the blood of bulls and of goats or the ashes of an heifer sprinkled over the unclean were sanctified by God's

appointment to serve for the purifying of the body,
surely much more shall the sacred blood of Christ, 14
who through the instrumentality of the eternal
Spirit presented himself a spotless sacrifice to God,
purge your consciences from your former sins, and
direct them, not to works of ritual holiness, but to
the spiritual worship of the living God. And ac- 15
cordingly he is the Mediator of the new covenant,
in order that having submitted to death for the ex-
piation of the offences which were committed under
the old covenant, he might obtain the promise of
their eternal inheritance for all who are summoned
to take possession of it. Even in the case of hu- 16
man covenants the ratification we know to be
usually accompanied by the death of a victim, and 17
that the obligation by which they bind the contract-
ing parties is considered as commencing with the
death of the animal sacrificed, and not earlier. In 18
conformity with which usage the Mosaic covenant
itself was confirmed by the shedding of blood, as
we are informed in the book of Exodus, (Exodus
xxiv. 6, 7, 8.) for when Moses had spoken every 19
precept to all the people according to the law, "he
took the blood of calves and of goats with water
and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both
the book and all the people, saying, This is the 20
blood of the covenant which God has dictated to
you." He also sprinkled with blood both the 21
tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. And 22
according to the directions of the same law, all the

purificatory ceremonies are performed with blood, and by the shedding of blood was the atonement made for all the people by the high priest. (Le-
23 viticus xvi. 24.) It was therefore expedient that the typical representations of heavenly things should be purified by those carnal emblems; but the true heavenly and spiritual things require a purification of a far superior and more excellent description.
24 For it is not into the earthly holy of holies, the mere perishable symbol of the heavenly one, that Christ our High Priest is entered, but *into the very sanctuary of heaven itself*, where he now officiates for us in the glorious presence of his eternal Father;
25 not for the purpose of offering again the great and effectual sacrifice of himself, as the Jewish high priest is obliged year after year to renew his earthly
26 expiatory sacrifice, (for in that case a similar necessity would have existed of a continuous repetition of that same blessed offering from the very foundation of the world[1] to the present time,) but, on the contrary, having once, and for ever, at his own good and appointed time, earned by the sacrifice of himself an expiation, both retrospective and pro-

[1] From this passage we necessarily infer that our Saviour's atonement for human sin had a *retrospective* as well as prospective operation, and consequently that the generations which existed before his appearance upon earth will be benefited by it no less than those which shall have been born subsequent to that great event.

spective, of the sins of the whole world. And as it 27
is allotted to all men to die once, and once only,
and afterwards to rise to judgment, so Christ, be- 28
ing once offered up for the remission of the sins of
many, shall a second time appear in glory, having
for ever abolished sin, for the salvation of those who
await his coming.

Considering then the law of Moses in its true 10
light, namely, as a typical representation of a future
and better covenant, and not as a complete and
final dispensation, we cannot but perceive, even in
the continually recurring necessity of the same
annual sacrifices, its total insufficiency to make its
worshippers perfect or holy. For had those sacri- 2
fices been really efficacious, their constant repeti-
tion would have been evidently superfluous, as the
consciences of the worshippers once purified by
those means could never have had, under that sup-
position, any reviving responsibility of guilt. But 3
the annual renewal of the Levitical sacrifices is a
direct admission, that those of the former years did
not attain their object: and, in fact, we cannot but 4
admit that it is quite impossible that the blood of
bulls or of goats should be able to take away sin.
Accordingly David describes the Messiah, upon his 5
coming into the world, as exclaiming, "Sacrifice
and offering thou wouldest not, but my body thou
hast made obedient to thy discipline; in burnt of- 6
ferings and sin offerings thou hast no pleasure;
then said I, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God, as 7

the book of the Scriptures has foretold concerning
8 me." (Psalm xl. 6.) Thus having in the former part
of the passage asserted that "sacrifice, and offering, and burnt offering, and sin offering, thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein, (which sacrifices are those prescribed by the Mosaic law,)
9 he proceeds to say, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God," thus substituting the obedience of our blessed Redeemer in the place of the cancelled obligations
10 of ritual ordinances. By obedience to which holy will of God we are sanctified through the one single and sufficient sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ.
11 While therefore the Jewish priesthood continue day after day ministering at the altar, and offering again
12 and again the same ineffectual sacrifice, our blessed Saviour, on the contrary, having made his one all-powerful expiation [m], has sate down for ever at
13 the right hand of God; henceforth waiting "till
14 his enemies shall be made his footstool." And that one sacrifice of himself extends an inexhaustible and everlasting redemption to those who are sanctified by faith in him.

[m] It is quite inconceivable that, with this explicit declaration of the apostle before them respecting the complete sufficiency of the great atonement for sin *once* offered, the Romish Church should, in imitation of the Jewish ritual, have so pertinaciously chosen to consider the beautiful commemorative institution of the Eucharist in the light of an incessantly recurring expiatory sacrifice.

The inspired prophet Jeremiah also, in a passage 15
immediately subsequent to that already quoted
from him, (Jeremiah xxx. 33.) speaks precisely to
the same purport. "This is the covenant which 16
I will make with them after those days, saith the
Lord: I will put my laws into their hearts, and in
their minds will I write them; and their sins and 17
iniquities will I remember no more." But where 18
sins are entirely cancelled, any further expiatory
sacrifice for sin is clearly superfluous.

Having then, my brethren, a just confidence that 19
we shall be permitted to enter within the heavenly
tabernacle through the expiatory blood of Jesus, by 20
the new and living way which he has consecrated for
us through the rending of the vail, that is, through
the sacrifice of his flesh; and having him for our 21
High Priest over the heavenly house of God; let 22
us draw near with a true heart, in the full assurance
of faith, having our hearts cleansed by his effectual
expiation from a polluted conscience, and our bodies
washed with the pure waters of baptism; and let 23
us hold fast the profession of our hope in him with-
out wavering, being assured that he is true and
faithful to his promises; and let us mutually en- 24
courage and excite one another to Christian affec-
tion, and the practice of good works; not omitting 25
from an undue fear of persecution the assembling
of ourselves together, as the practice of some of our
brethren is; but exhorting and strengthening one
another; and this let us do the more earnestly, as

you may see from the signs of the times, as foretold by our blessed Saviour, that the day of our Lord is
26 approaching. For if, through fear of any apprehension of the authorities of this world, we apostatize from our faith, after having assented to the blessed covenant of the Gospel, then, as I have already observed, there remains for us no longer
27 any expiation for sin, but, in its place, an awful anticipation of God's impending judgment and vengeance, which as a blazing fire shall devour his
28 impugners. Remember the severe punishment which is enjoined even against those who apostatize from the law of Moses, how it is required that such persons shall be put to death without mercy, if the fact be proved against them by the testimony of two
29 or three witnesses. (Deuteronomy xvii. 6.) And shall not a far more terrible retribution await that man who has knowingly trodden under foot the Son of God, and who has blasphemed as an unholy thing that sacred blood of Christ's covenant in which he had professed to seek redemption, and
30 has defied the Spirit of grace and mercy. We know what is the solemn language of Scripture respecting offences such as these. "Vengeance is mine: I will repay, saith the Lord." (Deuteronomy xxxii. 35.) and again, in the sentence which immediately follows, "The Lord shall judge
31 his people." And assuredly a fearful thing it is
32 to fall into the hands of the living God. Shrink not then, I beseech you, from the bold profession of

your faith through fear of your present persecutors,
but encourage yourselves by the recollection of the
fortitude which you displayed at the time of your
first conversion, when the animosity of your ad-
versaries was in vain exerted to prevent your
confession of the truth; when at one time you 33
were made a public spectacle to bear insults and
afflictions in your own persons; and at another so
fearlessly stood forward to countenance and en-
courage others when suffering under the same
injustice. For I cannot myself forget the kind and 34
generous manner with which you sympathized with
me in my imprisonment, and submitted, not with
patience only, but with cheerfulness, to the spolia-
tion of your property, from the conviction that you
had laid up for you in heaven far better and more
lasting possessions. Cast not away therefore, for 35
the sake of a little momentary suffering, this holy
confidence which has so vast a reward in store:
but remember that you are now called upon to 36
exhibit the patience and fortitude which become
soldiers of Christ; that having performed God's
will without murmuring, you may receive your final
compensation at his hands. For be assured that 37
your probation will be short, and that even now
God is preparing his coming to inflict vengeance
upon your oppressors. Meanwhile remember the 38
words of the prophet, (Habakkuk ii. 4.) "*the just
shall live by faith;* but if any man draw back from
it and fall away, my heart shall have no pleasure in

39 him." But we, my brethren, are not of those who apostatize to their own destruction, but of those who remain firm in their faith to the saving of their souls.

11 Let me then now remind you what faith is[a]. It is not the visible and tangible fruition of things present, but that which gives a substantial value to things as yet in remote futurity; it is that faculty of the mind by which we lay hold of the objects of the invisible world, as though they were actually subject to the perceptions of the bodily
2 senses. By it accordingly the great and good of former ages have manifested their firm reliance upon the divine will, and have thus become pleasing to
3 God. Faith is in fact the basis of all sound religion. It is through faith that we assent to the great truth that God made the universe, and that material ob-
4 jects could not have had a material first cause. By faith Abel offered to God a more satisfactory sacrifice than that of Cain, and was accordingly pronounced righteous, (the Almighty himself bearing witness of him to that effect by the acceptance of his gifts;) and even now by the example which he has afforded conveys a valuable lesson to man-
5 kind. By faith Enoch was removed from this world

[a] Nothing can be imagined more surprisingly beautiful and edifying than the whole of the following eloquent discussion on the nature of religious faith.

without experiencing death, disappearing from the earth because God had taken him to himself. For before that happy removal it is recorded of him that he pleased God: but without faith we know 6
that it is impossible to please him, inasmuch as the belief in God's existence and in his eternal attributes of justice and mercy and wisdom is the first foundation of all devotion whatever. By faith Noah, 7
when no invisible signs as yet gave warning of the impending destruction of mankind, obeyed the divine commands, and made ready the ark for the preservation of his family; and thus survived amid the wreck of an unbelieving world as an inheritor of that righteousness and salvation which comes by faith. By the same reliance upon the divine pro- 8
mises Abraham, being called to remove himself into a country which was to be the inheritance of his descendants, obeyed without hesitation, although an entire stranger to the country to which he was going: by faith he continued to dwell in the pro- 9
mised land, though without possessing one foot of it which he could call his own, dwelling merely in moveable tents, as after him did his sons Isaac and Jacob, the joint heirs with him of the promise; confidently looking forward to a city built upon im- 10
moveable foundations, of which God himself should be the architect. By faith also his wife Sarah 11
received power to bear a child when past the regular period of her life, trusting that He who made the promise would answer for its fulfilment. And the 12

consequence was that from her aged husband has descended a race as the stars of heaven in multitude, and innumerable as the sand upon the sea shore.
13 All these good men, let us recollect, passed through this life *with no better assurance than that of faith in the performance of God's promises, and without witnessing their completion; but seeing them only afar off, and tranquilly reposing and rejoicing in the firmness of their conviction, though feeling themselves notwithstanding strangers and aliens upon the soil*
14 *of this world.* For they confessed that they had no country which they could call their own, and that they looked for a more permanent home than
15 that which they occupied; and yet, had an earthly home been their object, they might readily have found one among their own relatives in Chaldea.
16 But the fact was, that it was an *heavenly* home after which they aspired; and God accordingly prepared them a city, and was not ashamed to acknowledge
17 them as his own peculiar and beloved people. By faith Abraham remained unshaken in that most perplexing trial, the enjoined sacrifice of his only son, whom he readily consented to offer up, although that very son had been pronounced to be the heir to
18 the divine promises; God himself having declared of him that through Isaac he should become the
19 father of many nations. For he felt assured that God was able to raise him up again even from the dead, and therefore he accordingly received him back from God's own hands even when he might

have been considered as virtually lost. By faith in 20
the peculiar promises made to his posterity, Isaac
bestowed an appropriate blessing respectively upon
Jacob and upon Esau. By faith Jacob, when he was 21
dying, prophesied respecting the two sons of Joseph,
and worshipped God bending over the top of his
staff. By faith Joseph foretold in his last moments 22
the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, and
gave directions for the conveyance of his own body
from thence. By faith Moses was hidden during 23
three months after his birth by his parents, because
they saw that the child was beautiful, and were not
afraid of disobeying the king's order. By faith 24
Moses himself, when he grew up to manhood,
refused to be considered any longer as the son of
Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to participate 25
in the afflictions of God's people than to enjoy the
immediate pleasures of a sinful life, and considering 26
the reproaches cast upon his countrymen, because
they looked forward to Christ's coming, as more
desirable than all the wealth of Egypt: for he knew
that the reward of his belief, though *remote*, was
certain. By faith he forsook Egypt without re- 27
garding Pharaoh's menaces, fixing his mind's eye
upon the invisible God to whom he trusted. By 28
faith he kept the first passover by sprinkling with
blood the door posts of the Israelites according
to the divine command, that the destroyer of
the first-born of the Egyptians might not touch
theirs. By faith the Israelites passed through 29

the Red sea as upon the dry land; which the
30 Egyptians attempting to do were drowned. By
faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they
31 had been encompassed during seven days. By
faith Rahab the harlot escaped destruction at the
capture of Jericho, because she had kindly re-
32 ceived the spies sent by Joshua. But why should
I produce more examples to the same purport?
for the time would fail me were I to dwell upon
those of Gideon, of Barak, of Samson, of Jeph-
tha, of David, of Samuel, and of the other
33 prophets; men who by the aid of faith subdued
kingdoms, executed righteousness, obtained the
34 promises, stopped the mouth of lions, passed unhurt
through the fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out
of weakness were made strong, were rendered
mighty in battle, overthrew the armies of their ad-
35 versaries: restored dead children alive to their
mothers; were cruelly beaten, yet accepted not
deliverance, because they looked for a better life
36 than the present; were insulted and scourged;
37 chained and imprisoned; were stoned to death;
were sawn asunder; were exposed to other fearful
trials; were slain by the sword; wandered about in
sheep-skins, and goat-skins; being destitute, afflicted,
38 maltreated; and living, like men of whom the world
was not worthy, in deserts, in mountains, in dens
39 and holes of the earth. And yet let us recollect,
that we may profit by the example, that these good
men, whose faith in God's promises has made them

so justly celebrated, *never lived to see those promises realized*, the Almighty having reserved until our 40
time the accomplishment of his better dispensation,
that we might be partakers with them of its mani-
fold blessings. Wherefore,. encouraged by this 12
multitude of glorious examples of holy fortitude and
submission, let us, manfully shaking off every
worldly incumbrance, and resisting all those mani-
fold seductions which beset us in this present trial
of our constancy, run with patience the race which
lies before us, looking for our encouragement to the 2
leader and perfecter of our faith, the blessed Jesus
himself, who for our sake exchanged the happiness
of heaven for the agonies of the cross, regardless of
the degradation, and who now sits for ever at the
right hand of the throne of God.[r] Cherish I beseech 3
you, my brethren, this divine example of our great
Master, who voluntarily submitted to so much vio-
lent opposition from the waywardness of a sinful
world, and derive fortitude and patience for your-
selves in this your hour of trial from that affecting
recollection. Remember that you have not yet, as 4
he did, resisted the temptations of the wicked even
unto blood: nor have you consoled yourselves, as 5
you might have done, by the comfortable assurance
of holy writ which applies so well to your present
afflictions. "My son, says Solomon, despise not
thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when
thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth 6
he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he

7 receiveth." (Proverbs iii. 11, 12.) If then you patiently submit to that wholesome discipline, comfort yourselves with the reflection that it is *a father who thus deals with you*, and that by this very chastisement he is now displaying his paternal
8 affection; and that, were he to withhold this seasonable and useful correction, it would mark in him rather the neglect of a stranger, than the well-
9 judging kindness of a parent. All of us have felt in our time the coercion of our earthly parents, and yet we did not love or revere them the less on that account: and shall we then refuse to submit patiently to the wise arrangements of the great Father of spirits, in whose hands are the gifts of life and
10 immortality? *They* chastised us that we might be induced to run our course well through this our present short and perishable existence; *his* corrections on the other hand are intended to prepare us to be partakers of his own imperishable holiness and
11 perfection. It is true indeed that all chastisement is hard to bear at the moment of its infliction; but then we should remember, that its final result is the tranquil enjoyment of spiritual improvement to such as have been duly trained in this salutary discipline.

12 Lift up then again, my brethren, your exhausted and enfeebled hands, and rouse for a second and
13 bolder effort your sinking knees; and remove every unnecessary obstacle from the straight pathway of your duty, that you may run safely over it without

strain or dislocation. Let your anxious desire be to 14
maintain peace and good will with all men, and to
attain to that purity of heart without which no man
shall see the Lord. Be careful that none among 15
you fall short in his own endeavours of the assisting
grace of God which has been extended to him.
Let no evil and bitter weeds of sinful appetites
spring up among you to your mutual seduction.
Let there be no fornicator in your society, no 16
hardened and reckless person who, like Esau, will
sell his birthright, his eternal inheritance, for a
mere mess of pottage, for a little temporal ease and
enjoyment. Remember the awful example of the 17
person now mentioned. In a thoughtless moment
he parted with his future hopes, and *afterwards*,
when he would have claimed the blessing which he
had so foolishly forfeited, he obtained it not. Re-
pentance came too late, although he urged his de-
mand with many tears. The summons to God's 18
covenant which you have now received is one of a
far more momentous character than that which was
given to our forefathers under circumstances of such
dreadful solemnity. You are not standing as they
did under a tangible mountain, amid fire, and
clouds, and darkness, and whirlwinds, and the blast 19
of the trumpet, and that thrilling voice which they
who heard intreated that it might not continue to
address them: "Speak thou, said they unto Moses, 20
and we will hear, but let not God speak with us
lest we die." (Exodus xx. 19.) "If so much as a

beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned or thrust through with a dart," was the injunction on
21 that solemn occasion, (Exodus xix. 13.) an occasion so fearful and impressive, that even Moses cried out, " I am exceedingly afraid and tremble."
22 But you are placed on the verge of the heavenly mount Sion itself, the residence of the ever-living God, the celestial Jerusalem, whose inhabitants are
23 myriads of angels, amid the thronged assemblage of God's first-born saints, whose names are written in the book of life; amid the souls of just men made perfect, and before the very throne of our
24 Almighty Judge; and in the presence of the blessed Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant; a covenant which has been confirmed by the sprinkling of far more precious blood than that which God ac-
25 cepted in the sacrifice of Abel. Beware then, that you turn not away with indifference from Him who now addresses you, and calls you to his obedience; for if our forefathers escaped not the divine vengeance when they turned a deaf ear to the words of a perishable law delivered to them by a mortal man, Moses, much more assuredly shall we perish if we
26 despise him who speaks to us from heaven itself. That almighty voice then shook the earth only; but now it shall fulfil the words of the prophet, (Haggai ii. 6.) " Yet once more, I shake not the earth only,
27 *but also the very heavens.*" Mark in this passage the words " once more:" do they not imply that

all temporary and provisional things will be then finally and for ever shaken off, and that that only will be allowed to remain which God has determined should be *eternally immoveable?* Wherefore 28
let us, looking to a kingdom which shall survive that shock which will displace the very heavens themselves, cherish with awe and holy fear that divine grace, by the aid of which alone we can render acceptable service to our Almighty Father: for he 29
is, in his wrath, as a consuming fire.

Cherish brotherly affection one to another. 13

Forget not to exercise hospitality; we are in- 2
formed, you know, by Scripture, that in so doing some persons have entertained even angels unawares.

Remember those who suffer imprisonment, for 3
you have suffered in like manner. Remember all in affliction, for you, as men, are liable to the same.

Marriage and the unpolluted bed is honourable 4
in all conditions of life, but God will bring to judgment both the fornicator and the adulterer.

Avoid covetousness, and be content with your 5
present lot; for God himself has promised, "I will never leave nor forsake thee:" so that we may con- 6
fidently exclaim with the Psalmist, "The Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man can do unto me." (Psalm cxviii. 6.)

Forget not your spiritual instructors, who first 7

announced to you the doctrine of salvation; and, considering the tenor of their lives, imitate them in the firmness of your faith.

8 Remember that God cannot alter. Christ was the same yesterday which he is to-day, and will
9 continue so for ever. Be not then carried about by various and strange doctrines, destructive of the simplicity of evangelical truth. Let your hope and holy conviction derive their sustenance from your acceptance of the divine grace and mercy; not from carnal meats and sacrifices, from which those who
10 resort to them can derive no profit. Ours is a sacrifice from which they who serve in the Levitical tabernacle have no privilege to feed, as is evident from what is prescribed in the ritual with respect to the sin-offering, in which Christ's sacrifice is
11 typically prefigured. For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest as a sin-offering, are required to be
12 burnt without the camp. (Leviticus xvi. 27.) In conformity with which prophetic type, Jesus also, that he might purify the people from their sins by his own blood, submitted to be sacrificed without
13 the gate of Jerusalem. Let us therefore after his example go forth with him without the camp, bearing our share in the contumely to which he sub-
14 mitted; for it is not here that we have our lasting abode, but we seek for one with him in the abode
15 of God himself. By him then, as by our eternal High Priest, let us offer our continual sacrifice

of praise and thanksgiving to God, the offering of grateful lips acknowledging him as our Redeemer.

Omit not however deeds of social kindness and 16
of beneficence to those who are in want, for these are sacrifices really acceptable to God.

Obey and shew deference to your spiritual rulers, 17
for they keep watch for the welfare of your souls, for which they must one day be accountable: enable them then to render that account with joy and satisfaction, and not with regret that their labours have been ineffectual both to them and to yourselves.

Pray for me; for I can confidently say, that I 18
have conscientiously and honestly striven to do my duty well and faithfully in all things: pray for me, 19
and at this moment the more earnestly, that I may by God's blessing be again enabled to visit you.

May the God of peace, He who raised again from 20
the dead the great Shepherd of that flock which he purchased by the precious blood of the new covenant, namely, the Lord Jesus Christ, may He make 21
you perfect in every good work, that you may be enabled to do his will; producing in you all good and holy inclinations, such as may be accepted by him for the sake of Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

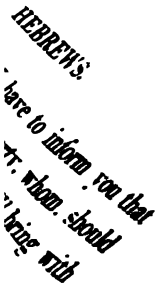
My brethren, be not offended, I intreat you, with 22
the few words of exhortation which I have thought

it fit to write to you. I have to inform you that
our brother Timothy is set at liberty, whom, should
he come to me sufficiently early, I will bring with
me when I visit you.

24 Salute all your spiritual pastors from me, and all
our believing brethren. All our brethren of Italy
salute you. Grace be with you all. Amen.

THE question respecting the authenticity of the Epistle to the Hebrews, as is well known, has given rise to occasional discussion both in ancient and modern times. One opinion very early received into the Church was, that it contains the sentiments of St. Paul as dictated generally by that apostle to Clemens of Rome, or to his companion Luke, and that it was moulded by one of those latter persons into its present form; a surmise not without some degree of plausibility, when we recollect that it was the constant habit of St. Paul to avail himself of the aid of an amanuensis for the transcription of his Epistles, and that the pressure of business in consequence of his imprisonment may possibly on this one occasion have induced him to avail himself in a still more extended degree of the co-operation of his friends. Another theory supposes it to have been written by the apostle in Hebrew, the mother-tongue of the persons to whom it is addressed, and to have been subsequently translated into Greek by St. Luke. It has however been well observed, that the internal evidence of the style is incompatible with this idea, many of those

untranslatable peculiarities of expression occurring in it, which usually designate original composition, and which seldom can be adequately transfused into another language. Still, whatever may be the uncertainty attaching to this question, that the sentiments and doctrines contained in this Epistle are, at all events, those of Paul himself, no one, who will take the trouble of comparing it with the other writings undoubtedly his, can, I conceive, for a moment hesitate to admit. It bears, in fact, every mark of that peculiar cast of mind which so strongly characterizes all the works of that great apostle: the same energetic tone of remonstrance; the same amiable spirit of pure practical morality; the same conciliation of manner; the same earnest and pathetic appeals to the gentler affections of those whom he addresses; and, in the abstruser parts of his argument, the same tendency to dwell upon minute coincidences and fine-drawn deductions, which pervades his other controversial discussions. The great and primary truth which it is the object of this Epistle to enforce is, "the divinity of our blessed Saviour," with the obvious inference deducible from that doctrine, namely, "the complete sufficiency of his one great expiation for sin:" a truth which is indeed substantially implied throughout the whole of his other writings, and without which preliminary admission the greater part of the arguments contained in them would be, to say the least, inconclusive, if not absolutely unintelligible. But in the Epistle to the Hebrews, those awful topics are not merely incidentally alluded to, but are made the prominent and almost exclusive subjects of discussion, with a direct plainness of assertion which would appear to leave no possibility of evasion to their impugners short of a total denial of the authenticity of the work itself. And to this feeling accordingly it is that we cannot but refer the unwillingness displayed by some de-



tians to receive it into the sacred
them to avail themselves of some
in the style of the composi-
doubts upon its authen-
peculiarities would justify.
rsy however has been precisely
arian Christian would wish: a vast
eight of evidence, both external and
rmation of the authority of this Epistle,
hus accumulated by the labours of learned
l every reader of moderate industry may avail
of by turning to the many writers who have dis-
sed this question, and to whom I refer him for the details of an argument much too long to be adequately considered in this place.

And now, whilst taking leave of this most truly important portion of the Scriptures of the New Testament, the Epistles of St. Paul, let me make a few passing observations upon the irresistible confirmation which these several writings afford of the truth and divine origin of our holy religion. That they are all of them really the productions of the person whose name they bear will not, I conceive, be controverted at this moment by the most hardened controversialist in the school of scepticism. Were the uniform admission of antiquity to this effect to be considered of little weight, the single argument of Paley, so triumphantly established in his Horæ Paulinæ, is quite sufficient to confirm that fact by a degree of evidence which no

one whose ears are not wilfully closed to conviction could possibly deem unsatisfactory. It is therefore no gratuitous assumption of the matter in discussion to consider this point as at length conceded by all parties. But if so, then I would ask any fair and impartial person, who knows enough of human nature to enable him to judge of the principles and motives upon which rational beings act, diligently to peruse the Epistles of St. Paul, and then to put to himself the question, "whether they could by any possibility have been composed by a person *not sincerely and solemnly convinced of the truth of the doctrines contained in them?*" I ask not at this moment whether he himself would acknowledge the principles there asserted to be true, but only whether the *writer* actually believed them to be such. Surely on this point (unless we are willing to discard all internal evidence whatever as fallacious) the manner in which these compositions are written, —the whole tenor of the language and sentiments contained in them,—the author's earnest solicitude to convince,—the deep solemnity of feeling,—the subdued and temperate tone of reasoning maintained by him even on those mysterious and transcendental topics which would appear to justify, if not to call for, almost any possible degree of intellectual excitement, and which an impostor or a fanatic would not have failed to affect, even had it not been really felt,—the almost uniformly unassuming gentleness of admonition in the place of an ambitious and magisterial tone of authority, —the unobtrusive humility of the writer's mind,—his constant anxiety rather to improve the understanding than to excite the passions,—his total abstinence from all those cheap and spurious aids of argument which less judicious theological disputants have in all ages been too prone to seek in the physical weaknesses of their hearers, by expatiating upon those revolting topics connected with our mortality,

from which man's nature instinctively shrinks, and upon those spiritual terrors which all the descendants of Adam must occasionally feel,—his uniform predisposition to dwell upon the idea of God's mercies rather than upon that of his more formidable attributes,—and last, though not least, the exquisite purity of the morality which he inculcates,—surely, I repeat, all these striking characteristics of the writings of this remarkable person denote one, who, whatever may be thought of the real truth of his doctrines, was himself, at all events, most immoveably convinced of their certainty and importance. If again we look to probable personal motives, to those views of temporal interest, I mean, which may naturally be suspected to operate with propagators of false or perverted systems of religion, still we are inevitably driven to the same conclusion, that, unless we really believe St. Paul to have been seriously impressed with the conviction of the truth of his own tenets, it is perfectly impossible to account for the self-denying, and, in a worldly point of view, the *humiliating* line of conduct which he so undeviatingly pursued. "If," as has been justly observed by Lord Lyttelton, "it appears that St. Paul had nothing to gain by taking this part, let us consider, on the other hand, what he gave up, and what he had reason to fear. He gave up a fortune which he was then in a fair way of advancing. He gave up that reputation which he had acquired by the labours and studies of his whole life, and by a behaviour which had been *blameless, touching the righteousness which is in the law.* He gave up his friends, his relations, and family, from whom he estranged and banished himself for life. He gave up that *religion which he had profited in above many of his equals in his own nation*, and those *traditions of his fathers which he had been more exceedingly zealous of.* How hard this sacrifice was to a man of his warm temper,

and above all men to a Jew, is worth consideration. That nation is known to have been more tenacious of their religious opinions than any other upon the face of the earth. The strictest and proudest sect among them was that of the Pharisees, under whose discipline St. Paul was bred. The departing therefore so suddenly from their favourite tenets, renouncing their pride, and from their disciple becoming their adversary, was a most difficult effort for one to make so nursed up in the esteem of them, and whose early prejudices were so strongly confirmed by all the power of habit, all the authority of example, and all the allurements of honour and interest. These were the sacrifices he had to make in becoming a Christian: let us now see what inconveniences he had to fear:—the implacable vengeance of those he deserted; that sort of contempt which is hardest to bear, the contempt of those whose good opinion he had most eagerly sought; and all those other complicated evils which he describes in his second Epistle to the Corinthians, evils, the least of which were enough to have frightened any impostor even from the most hopeful and profitable cheat. But where the advantage proposed bears no proportion to the danger incurred, or the mischiefs endured, he must be absolutely out of his senses who will either engage in an imposture, or, being engaged, persevere."

If however we cannot but admit the *sincerity* of St. Paul's own conviction of the truth of those doctrines, to the propagation of which he thus sacrificed every human tie; and together with that sincerity if we admit also the *competency of his understanding to pronounce upon a simple matter of fact*, (and of that competency who that has ever considered the acuteness of reasoning displayed throughout his writings could venture to express a doubt?) —then of necessity we must assent also to the conclusion, that those doctrines were *undeniably true*.

Had Paul been really an impostor, he must inevitably have known himself to be such. The signal miracle to which he so frequently asserts that he owed his conversion; the thorough knowledge of the peculiar nature of the Christian covenant, which he solemnly declares that he derived from no human communication, but directly and immediately from preternatural revelation; and the miraculous powers to which, in various parts of his writings, he repeatedly lays claim, are all perfectly irreconcileable with his own sincere belief in an actual and easily-detected delusion. Admit however his own statement respecting his own personal experience to be correct, and it is impossible for us to stop at this single admission; grant this one point, and the whole system of the Christian dispensation, link by link, will follow in due and necessary succession: not merely that lax and latitudinarian system which culls and chooses from holy writ such principles as may best accord with its own favourite theories, but the whole of the Trinitarian doctrine, with those great and vital dogmas which give to Christianity its peculiar and exclusive character; namely, those of the fallen state of man's nature; the inadequacy of human works for justification; the necessity of Christ's atonement, and of the strengthening and cooperating aid of the Holy Spirit. It has been occasionally asked whether St. Paul has added the knowledge of any really new truths to those previously communicated by our blessed Saviour, or asserted in the book of the Acts; and, if not, what then is the value of his writings? Even if we decline answering the first of these questions in the affirmative, still it by no means follows that they are not of momentous consequence as means of Christian instruction. In them, at all events, the great principles casually glanced at in those former writings have been more fully developed, and their salutary tendency demon-

strated, not in argument only, but in their best practical comment, the recorded feelings and principles of Christ's own favoured emissary. What in the former was the dark anticipation of then ill-understood prophecy, is in the latter the retrospective certainty of established history; what is there precept only, or the theoretical exposition of truth, is here active holiness exhibited in every practical point of view best fitted to operate as an example, and to instruct us how Christians ought to act under every possible contingency of circumstances. To those persons therefore who consult the sacred writings for that vital object of real edification which they were intended to promote, the writings of this great apostle will ever be a favourite and important study. They will accordingly read them, not for the too seductive purpose of entangling themselves in the inextricable metaphysics of theology, of elucidating some cherished theory, or of supporting some partial view of the Christian dispensation, but for the sake of the fervency of feeling, the purity of principle, the consolatory firmness of faith, the clearness of apprehension, the conception at once comprehensive and definite of the scheme of our salvation, which they afford; and because they will practically find it impossible to commune with the inspired teacher and champion of these stupendous doctrines without rising up from the study with every moral feeling refined, purified, and soothed, and their apprehension of the perfection of the divine attributes, and their reposing confidence in God's mercies, enlivened and strengthened.

THE

EPISTLE GENERAL

OF

JAMES.

THE date usually assigned to the following Epistle is the year of our Lord 61. St. James is supposed to have suffered martyrdom from the violence of the Jewish authorities at Jerusalem in the subsequent year.

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

1 JAMES, the servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes dispersed among the Gentiles, greeting.

The object of the General Epistle of St. James appears to have been less that of inculcating the primary truths of revelation, than that of enforcing the necessity of those fruits of true faith and holiness, the various Christian virtues, the existence of which in the human character presupposes the assent of the understanding to the proofs of our religion, and the affection of the heart for its precepts, as points already secured. It differs therefore from the general tenor of the writings of St. Paul in the single circumstance, that it contemplates the great requisites of the Christian character from an opposite point of view, arriving at the evidence of the existence of faith in each individual through the medium of works, instead of adopting the equally just and perfectly consistent inference of the latter apostle, who, having established the necessity of faith, arrives through those premises at the no less certain conclusion, that where sincere belief exists, there good works will inevitably follow. The sentiments of those two inspired teachers, therefore, are in all respects the same; whilst their respective modes of conveying instruction differ, as might naturally be expected, according to the peculiar circumstances of each individual, and as the spiritual condition of the Churches over which they severally presided suggested the expediency of this or that mode of enforcing the practice of the various duties which constitute the full perfection of a Christian life.

2 Consider it, my brethren, a subject of self-con-
3 gratulation when you fall into various trials, as you cannot but know that these proofs of the soundness of your faith are productive of patient submission:

let that submission therefore be implicit in all re- 4
spects, that you may be complete in whatever is
requisite for the perfection of the Christian cha-
racter. And if any of you feels that he wants a 5
due apprehension of any part of spiritual know-
ledge, let him pray for the illumination of his
understanding to God who gives liberally and with-
out grudging, and let him be assured that it shall 6
be granted to him. Let him however ask in faith
with simplicity and sincerity; not tossed about like
a troubled sea by unsteady and contradictory wishes,
for prayers so desultorily conceived cannot hope to 7
receive their accomplishment from God. But it is 8
only where the heart has taken one single and de-
cided bias, that such consistency of character can
be reasonably expected.

Let every brother, who has been placed by Pro- 9
vidence in a humble station in this life, exult in the
sublimity of his future expectations.

Let every one who is rich in this world's trea- 10
sures exult that he has the grace to appreciate them
according to their true value; for they shall fade
away as the flower of the field. The sun rises with 11
its burning heat and parches the herbs, and their
flowers droop, and their beauty withers: so shall
the rich man wither in the midst of his worldly
pursuits.

Happy is that man who passes uninjured through 12
the midst of trial; for having been proved a faith-
ful servant, he shall receive the crown of life

which the Lord has promised to those who love him.

13 Let no man, when he has fallen into temptation, say, "I am tempted by God;" for God, who is all perfect, is neither himself subject to temptation, nor
14 tempts others. But man is then tempted when he is agitated and enticed by his own unruly appetites;
15 for appetite conceives and brings forth sin; and sin growing strong and vigorous brings forth death.
16 Be not deceived then, my brethren, by such delusive
17 arguments. Man, on the other hand, creates not his own blessings, but he receives *them* immediately from God. Every good gift, every perfect accomplishment, descends to us from heaven, from the Father of all lights, whose attributes are eternal and un-
18 changeable[a]. By his own good pleasure, and for no merit of our own, he begot us as his sons by the holy word of truth, that we might be to him as it were the firstfruits of his creatures.

19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man of you be swift to hear instruction; considerate and cautious in his attempts to communicate it to others; and slow to anger where his exhortations
20 fail of immediate effect: for it is not violence or impetuosity that can bring any one to that holiness of
21 heart which is acceptable to God. Wherefore,

[a] This sentiment of St. James accords exactly with the doctrine so uniformly inculcated by St. Paul.

divesting yourselves in the first place of every moral blemish and pollution, apply to your own consciences with becoming meekness the ingrafted word of revelation, which is able to save your souls; making yourselves doers of that word, and not 22
hearers only; and be not contented with the mere externals of holiness. For a man who is a hearer 23
of the word only, and not a doer also, is like a person who contemplates for a single moment the features of his own countenance in a looking-glass, and, having gazed at himself, goes away without 24
farther troubling himself to recollect what his appearance was: but he who bends earnestly to look 25
into the perfect law of Christian liberty, and continues so to do, in order that he may properly and suitably arrange himself by it, that man, not being a mere careless hearer, but zealous in performance, shall be blessed in the final success of his efforts.

If any man among you presumes that he is re- 26
ligious, but cannot restrain his tongue from calumniating or depreciating others, that man, be assured, deceives his own heart, and his religion is valueless. Pure and undefiled religion, such as is really ac- 27
ceptable to God and the Father, is this: to take care of the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep ourselves unspotted by the contaminations of the world.

My brethren, let no unworthy distinctions be- 2
tween man and man from worldly and selfish motives bring discredit upon your profession of

2 belief in our blessed Lord Jesus Christ. I ask you,
should a person come into your assembly with a
gold ring and in splendid apparel, and at the same
time should a poor man enter with ragged clothing,
3 and you were to say to the former, "Seat yourself
here in a place of honour," and to the latter, "Stand
there, or if you wish to sit, place yourself at my
4 feet," would you not be making uncharitable and
culpable distinctions unbecoming of the meek re-
ligion you profess?

5 Let me ask you, my beloved brethren, was it not
the poor in worldly wealth whom God called to be
made rich in faith, and pronounced to be heirs of
that blessed kingdom which he has promised to all
6 those who love him? and shall we despise those
same persons because of their poverty? Who, let
me ask again, are your oppressors at this very
moment? who are they who bring you daily be-
fore the tribunals of the magistrate? Are they not
7 the rich? Is it not they who revile continually in
your hearing the holy name of Christ, from whom
8 we Christians take our designation? Observe then
the great and golden maxim of our Saviour, "Thou
shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," and you will
9 do well: but remember always to make that rule
universal, and not by undue distinctions and par-
tialities to observe it in your conduct to one class,
whilst you violate it in your treatment of another.
By acting thus inconsistently, you turn that sacred
maxim against yourselves, and stand self-convicted

of a wilful breach of that very law which you profess to regard. Recollect that he who pledges 10
himself to obey the whole of a law, and yet knowingly violates one of its injunctions, is a violater and despiser of the whole code. For the same divine 11
authority which commanded, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," commanded also, "Thou shalt do no murder:" if then you abstain from adultery but commit murder, you become no less guilty of disobedience to that supreme Legislator from whom the whole law derives its sanction. Speak then and act on 12
all occasions as becomes persons who are to be judged by that comprehensive spiritual law, the great object of which is to correct and amend the whole character, and which is not to be explained away by minute and subtile distinctions; and be 13
assured that there shall be judgment without mercy to him who shews no mercy; whilst on the other hand a man's merciful deeds shall soften to himself the rigour of that final judgment to which he might be otherwise liable from the divine retribution.

Remember ever that it is the *whole character* 14
which the Gospel undertakes to correct and amend, and that it is not therefore by a partial cultivation of one Christian virtue to the exclusion of another that we can be said to discharge the duty to which we are pledged. What for instance, my brethren, can be the value of faith itself, unless that faith ripen into works of effectual charity? Can faith alone save us? Suppose the case of a brother or 15

16 a sister left in nakedness and destitution, and one of you should say to them, "Go in peace, warm yourselves, and refresh yourselves with abundant food," and yet at the same time afford them none of the means by which those wants might be satisfied; would the mere mention of food and clothing
17 stand them in stead of the actual reality? Equally dead and valueless with such unsubstantial charity,
18 be assured, is faith without works; on which barren quality should any person be disposed to build his exclusive hopes of salvation, I would argue with him thus. "You have faith, and I have works; shew me then, if you can, your boasted faith without works, and I will engage to prove by my works
19 the validity of my faith." You will say that you believe in one God: be it so: the acknowledgment is a good one, inasmuch as it is the basis of all religion; but recollect that it is not the *whole* of religion, and that the very devils who tremble with
20 dread of his vengeance believe the same. Vain reasoner, search the Scriptures themselves, and there you will find that faith without works is dead
21 and unprofitable. Was not our father Abraham justified by works when he offered his son Isaac
22 upon the altar? See you not that his faith even on that occasion operated only conjointly with his
23 works, and was made perfect by them? and accordingly the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed in God, and it was counted to him for righteousness:" and he was therefore called

" the friend of God." Is it not evident then, even 24
from the case of this remarkable display of faith,
that man is justified by works cooperating with
faith, and not by faith exclusively? In like manner, 25
was not Rahab [b] the harlot justified by her works,
when she hospitably received Joshua's spies, and
assisted them in their escape by another road?

[b] From the mention of Rahab in this place in conjunction with Abraham it appears probable that St. James had in his mind the passage in St. Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, xi. 17, 31. in which the examples of these two persons are quoted with those of many others as models of faith. It is natural to suppose that that same fatal misapprehension, which has so frequently prevailed in modern times respecting faith as an *exclusive* condition of salvation, had already begun to manifest itself even at that early period, and that advantage had been taken of the words of the latter apostle by the licentious and profligate, to justify their perseverance in an evil course of life. St. James therefore refutes the fallacy by shewing that true and complete faith necessarily involves the idea of good works as an inseparable accompaniment. Abraham not only believed in God's promise, but he also *actually prepared to sacrifice Isaac*: Rahab not only believed the judgments which were about to overtake her countrymen, but she also *received and sheltered the spies of Joshua as her guests*. Had St. James not intended an allusion to St. Paul's writings, it would be difficult to perceive in the character of Rahab a reason why her example should be thus expressly cited in two separate portions of the New Testament.

26 Precisely then as the body without the soul is
inanimate matter, so faith without works is dead
also.

3 Be not too many of you eager to correct and
admonish your neighbours, recollecting that whilst
you minutely censure others, you are in reality
2 pronouncing judgment against yourselves. For all
of us have our own peculiar failings, of which an
intemperate and censorious tongue is not the least,
which, when a man has learned effectually to re-
strain, he need not fear that he should want energy
to bring his other unruly members under a proper
3 discipline. Do not we put bits into the mouths of
horses, in order to render them obedient, and do we
not by these means direct the motions of the whole
4 animal? Are not ships, large and unwieldy as they
are, and tossed about by the violence of the winds,
still directed from port to port at the will of the
5 steersman by means of a small rudder? As the bit
in the horse's mouth, and as the rudder in a vessel,
is the tongue of man in the human body: a small
member indeed, but still powerful in its operations.
Observe how vast a pile of combustibles a small
6 spark of fire may consume. Not less destructive in
its effects is an unruly tongue, which is a little
world of mischief within itself: like it, it seizes
hold of the whole body, burning up with evil pas-
sions every thing with which it comes in contact,
and the fire with which it is kindled is from hell
7 itself. Human ingenuity has succeeded in taming

every species of savage beasts, birds, reptiles,
and marine animals; but it is unable to tame the 8
unruly licence of the venomous and slanderous
tongue. Adapted for the best of purposes, we
profane the blessed gift of speech to the worst.
With it we offer up praises and prayers to our Al- 9
mighty Father, and with it we spit forth imprecations
against our fellow creatures made after his own
divine image. And thus one and the same mouth 10
is made an instrument indifferently for blessing or
cursing. My brethren, ought such things to be?
Does any fountain send forth from the same source 11
both sweet waters and bitter? Can the fig tree bear 12
olives, or a vine figs? Does salt and fresh water
gush together from the same spring head? Is there 13
then any wise and preeminently gifted person among
you? let him shew his superiority, as a Christian
should do, by the purity of his life and actions, and
by that suavity of disposition which is the surest
mark of true wisdom. But if disgraceful jealousies 14
and recriminations will prevail in your societies,
let not, at least, such unchristian feelings assume to
themselves the garb of superior excellence, nor give
the lie to the humble and unassuming religion
of the blessed Jesus. Believe me, that fancied 15
superiority of intellect which displays itself in depre-
ciating the conduct of others is not the wisdom
which descends from above, but is, on the contrary,
earthly, carnal, and fiendlike. For where bitter 16
and angry feelings prevail, there violence and every

17 species of mischief will be found in company. But
the wisdom which is from heaven is in the first
place pure, then peaceable, then disposed to defer-
ence to the feelings and opinions of others, then
conciliatory, then merciful and beneficent, and in
all points unbiassed by unjust partialities, and free
18 from guile and deceit: and he best sows in the
hearts of others the fruits of the religion of meek-
ness, who is himself meek and compassionate in all
his own habits.

4 How is it then that strifes and warfare prevail so
fearfully among you? Is it not that you have not
yet learned the great Christian duty to coerce your
2 rebellious and sensual appetites? You cherish all
the cravings and desires of an ungoverned imagina-
tion, and repine that you are not satisfied; you
shed blood in the hope of attaining your object, yet
fail of success: you struggle and contend for it one
with another, but meet only with disappointment.
And why are you disappointed? because you ask
not for what you want in prayer to the Almighty.
3 You *do* ask and are again disappointed: and why?
because you ask with unchristian feelings, and for
4 unchristian and sensual objects. O adulterers and
adulteresses! have you yet to learn that the friend-
ship of this world is enmity with God, and that he
who leagues himself with the pleasures of this
wicked life is waging war against the Almighty?
5 Think you that the Scriptures describe man's na-
ture inaccurately when they say of it, "that the

imagination of his heart is evil from his youth?"
God's grace however is ever ready to assist those 6
who seek humbly and earnestly for amendment, as
we are assured by another passage of the inspired
writings; "God resisteth the proud, and sheweth
mercy, and giveth his grace to the humble." (Pro-
verbs iii. 34.) Submit yourselves then to God's 7
blessed protection, and under his support resist the
devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, 8
and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands,
ye sinners, and learn purity and simplicity of heart,
ye double minded. Humble yourselves, repent, 9
and weep for your transgressions: let your laugh
of mirth be turned into sorrow, your revelry into
sadness; prostrate yourselves in holy contrition be- 10
fore your God, and he will raise you up.

Speak not censoriously, my brethren, one of an- 11
other. He who takes upon himself to censure and
judge his brother is putting himself in the place of
the law, and in so doing is slandering that law of
which he usurps the office, making himself rather
an arbiter of what the law is, than a zealous per-
former of the duties it enjoins. Remember that 12
there is one Being, and only one, who gives law to
us all; in whose hands are the issues of life and
death; how then shall we dare, by judging our
fellow-creatures, to assume to ourselves his high
prerogative?

Poor frail mortal beings! who are you that ven- 13
ture to say, "to-day or to-morrow we will go to

such or such a city, and there we will reside a twelvemonth, and there we will traffick and make great profit," knowing not what to-morrow shall
14 be? for what is your tenure of that life on which you calculate? a smoke which unrolls itself and
15 passes away. In all such anticipations then of an uncertain futurity, let your language be always, "if such be God's will, and our lives be spared, then
16 will we do this or that." Be assured that such unhesitating confidence in his own speculations upon a mere contingent possibility is unseemly in
17 so frail a creature as man; and remember also, that he who knows what is unseemly, yet perseveres in practising it, is guilty of positive sin.

5 And you, ye rich, howl and lament for the
2 miseries that are coming upon you. Your wealth has fallen to decay, and your splendid garments are
3 become moth-eaten: your gold and your silver have become tarnished, and their rust shall be a testimony against you, and shall eat into your flesh like fire. You have hoarded up treasures which shall rise in judgment against you in the latter days.
4 Mark; the wages of your labourers, who have reaped your fields for you, the hard-earned wages which you have fraudulently[c] withheld from them,

[c] What an awful contrast does this description of the pampered and selfish Jews, upon whose heads the storm of divine vengeance was preparing to burst, afford to that beautiful and humane injunction contained in their own law, and to which the apostle in this passage obviously

call for judgment against you: the cry of those who have gathered in your harvest has reached even to the ears of the Lord of hosts. You have lived 5
luxuriously and lasciviously upon the earth: you have fattened yourselves as in a day of surfeit and feasting: you have sate in judgment upon, and put 6
to death, the innocent man who made no resistance.

Be you meanwhile, on the other hand, my bre- 7
thren, patient, and await the coming of your Lord. Imitate the husbandman, who confidently calculates upon gathering in their due season the mature fruits of the earth, but notwithstanding observes without impatience the slow but gradual developement of their growth, the tardy succession of the seasons, and the coming on of the periodical rains. Be you 8
in like manner patient in your present endurance, and confident in your anticipation of the day of God's judgments, [d] for that day is approaching.

alludes! "Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates. *At his day thou shalt give him his hire; neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it: lest he cry unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee.*" Deuteronomy xxxiv. 14, 15.

[d] It is evident from this passage, as from several which occur in St. Paul's writings, that the approaching destruction of Jerusalem foretold by our Saviour was at this time confidently anticipated by the apostles.

9 Let no fretful murmuring, meanwhile, escape your
lips in your communings with one another, that
you may be found blameless when your Judge ar-
rives; and, believe me, he is at this moment at the
10 very door. Imitate the glorious examples of forti-
tude and forbearance afforded by the prophets of
old, who spoke to our forefathers in the name of
11 the Lord. Blessed, we know, are all they who
suffer patiently for righteousness sake. You have
heard of the patience of Job, and of the final com-
pensation which he received from God, who is a
God full of mercy and compassion.

12 More particularly let the tranquil tenor of your
minds be displayed in the even tone of your daily
conversation. Abstain from all oaths and violent
protestations. Swear not, either by the heaven, or
the earth, or any other object whatever; but let
your affirmation be simply "yes," and your nega-
tion "no," that you may be in all respects blame-
less.

13 Is any one of you in affliction? let him pray.
Is any one cheerful? let him sing hymns of praise
14 to God. Is any one sick? let him send for the
elders[e] of the Church, and let them pray over him,

[e] On this passage, and on that contained in Mark vi. 13. the Church of Rome, as is well known, has founded its doctrine of the sacrament of extreme unction. Father Paul indeed, in his history of the Council of Trent, relates that the Divines in that assembly asserted that the sacrament

and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord:
and the prayer which is offered for him in the ful- 15
ness of faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord
shall restore him to health: and, should he have
committed any sins, they shall be forgiven him.
Confess your sins therefore to one another, and pray 16
for one another, that God may restore you to health:
for be assured that the fervent prayer of a good
man has great influence with him. Remember the 17
instance of Elijah. He was a mere mortal man as
we are, and yet, when he prayed that there should
be no rain, God heard him; so that no rain fell
upon the earth during three years and six months;
and when he afterwards prayed for rain, it de- 18
scended immediately from the heavens, and the
earth brought forth her fruit. (1 Kings xvii. 7.)

in question derived its actual sanction from this injunction of St. James only, and that it was rather *hinted at* than really established on the occasion recorded by St. Mark in the place here referred to; inasmuch as, according to the theory of that Church, the apostles did not acquire the character of priests (an indispensable requisite for the due administration of that rite) until the time of our blessed Saviour's celebration of the last supper. This latter argument is an accurate specimen of that grave trifling, and those subtile distinctions, which in that portion of the Christian world have so fatally prevailed often to the total exclusion of the far more weighty matters of the divine law, judgment, mercy, and faith.

19 Finally, my brethren, remember, that if any one of you shall have wandered from the true faith, and
20 any person convert and reclaim him, he, who thus shall be instrumental in that good work of bringing back a sinner from the error of his ways, shall save a soul from perdition, and bring down God's mercy and forgiveness upon himself.

IT is a remarkable illustration of the strong tendency which prevails in many sincere and well-disposed believers, to imagine difficulties in Scripture where they can scarcely be said to exist, that so much discussion has been thought necessary to reconcile the supposed discrepancies in the doctrines taught by St. Paul, and by St. James, the writer of the preceding Epistle. The only real difference to be found between them consists, as I have already observed in a former note, in the single fact that they have looked upon the constituent moral perfections of a regenerate and converted character from contrary positions, the former dwelling more particularly upon that primary foundation of faith which will eventually grow up into an holy life; and the latter urging the cultivation of that true eventual holiness which can exist only where the foundation of faith has already been substantially laid. That the virtues inculcated in the preceding Epistle by St. James are not merely those of morality, as taught in the works of the pagan ethical writers, will be evident to all persons who will peruse it with attention. Almost all the duties there recommended are such as necessarily presuppose a belief of

the Christian scheme, and fervent sentiments of love and devotion towards its Author. "Let the poor," says he, "bear their present afflictions patiently and cheerfully, *because they know that they have an eternal reward stored up for them hereafter.*" Again, "Make not undue distinctions between man and man in your religious assemblies, preferring the rich, and depreciating the poor; *for you know who has said, Blessed are ye poor: and that it was to the poor and humble that the Gospel was first addressed.*" The same observation will apply to the admonitions requiring the cultivation of mutual charity, candour, consistency of good conduct, and fortitude under persecution for conscience sake; all which virtues, however analogous with the kindred habits pourtrayed by the heathen moralists, could exist in the degree, and under the peculiar modification, here recommended, in such breasts *only* as the sanctifying influence of God's Holy Spirit had previously visited and purified.

THE

FIRST GENERAL EPISTLE

OF

PETER.

St. Peter dates the following Epistle from Babylon, under which name the early Christian Fathers considered him as designating Rome; an opinion which has been generally adopted by later writers. He is supposed to have written it in the last-mentioned city, about the year of our Lord 64, a short time previous to his martyrdom under Nero.

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

1 PETER, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the brethren dispersed through Pontus, Galatia, Cappa-
2 docia, the province of Asia, and Bithynia, chosen, according to the foreknowledge of God, by the sanctifying influence of the Spirit, to the obedience of Christ, and redemption by the sprinkling of his blood,—grace and peace be multiplied to you.

The Jewish converts to Christianity were, at the time in which this Epistle was written, undergoing severe persecutions from the rulers of the various synagogues, not in Jerusalem only, but through the whole of Lesser Asia. St. Peter accordingly addressed this exhortation to them for the purpose of strengthening their resolution, and confirming in them those feelings of faith, holiness, and patient submission to the divine will, which the urgent pressure of affliction might be suspected to have in some degree impaired. The arguments on which he chiefly insists are,

First, the unworldly character of the blessings promised to believers by the Christian covenant; and consequently that those who look for the joys of eternity must make their account to submit to afflictions in the present life.

Secondly, the necessity that all those, who professed to seek after spiritual righteousness, and who had consequently abjured many of the usages of their pagan neighbours, should vindicate the purity of their holy profession by the harmlessness of their lives, and the consistent integrity of their conduct, both public and private.

Thirdly, that as Christ himself suffered persecution from the waywardness of mankind, in like manner must all his followers expect to meet with the same from the malignity of human passions.

Fourthly, that the divine vengeance long since foretold by our blessed

Saviour is now on the point of overtaking their persecutors; and that if even God's own servants experience their share of affliction, much more in the day of retribution will his wrath fall heavy upon those who have uniformly oppressed his Church, and made war against his faith.

Blessed be our God and the Father of our Lord 3
Jesus Christ, who, through his great mercy, has
begotten us again to a living hope, through the
resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, of an 4
incorruptible, undefiled, and imperishable inherit-
ance, treasured up for us in the heavens, preserving 5
us by his almighty power, that through our faith in
him we may attain to that salvation which shall be
revealed at the last day. In which blessed hope 6
you look forward with joy to your final allotment,
bearing in the mean time the short but necessary
afflictions of this life, in order that your faith, being 7
proved by a variety of trials, may come out far
more precious than perishable gold from the re-
finer's furnace, and being found pure may receive
the stamp of approbation, honour, and glory, at the
second coming of our Lord, whom you love at this 8
moment, though as yet you have had no personal
knowledge of him; and confiding in whom, though
your eyes have never yet beheld him, you even now
exult in unspeakable and heavenly joy, receiving as 9
the recompence of your faith the salvation of your
souls. Of that promised salvation the prophets of 10
old, who foresaw from afar the blessings which God
had in store for our age, made diligent and anxious

11 enquiry, darkly conjecturing what blessed period of
time the Holy Spirit by which they were inspired
seemed to designate, and what could be that mys-
terious arrangement which was to receive its ac-
complishment first in the sufferings, and afterwards
12 in the glorification, of the promised Messiah. They
knew indeed, that not for their day, but for ours,
was reserved the full manifestation of that glorious
dispensation, which has in these latter times been
announced to you by the preaching of the heavenly
inspired teachers whom you have heard; a dispens-
ation so solemnly mysterious, that the very angels
themselves have wished to search into it, and yet
13 have not been able. Be it yours then to mark your
sense of its ineffable value, by the earnestness of
your endeavours to live worthily of that your high
vocation in sobriety and patience, perseveringly
looking forward in joyful expectation to the salva-
tion which is prepared for you at the destined time
14 of our gracious Redeemer's second coming. Live
therefore, I beseech you, as obedient children, not
according to the sinful appetites of your days of
15 ignorance, but according to the pure and holy na-
ture of Him who would have you and all his crea-
16 tures imitate his own purity and holiness; accord-
ing to his own injunction delivered to our fore-
fathers by the mouth of Moses: "Be ye holy, for
17 I am holy." (Leviticus xix. 2.) And as you know
that your Almighty Father is no partial accepter of
persons, but rewards each man in all respects ac-

cording to his works[a], be mindful to pass the time of your allotted sojournment upon earth with the anxious caution of persons who know that they must one day give a strict account of their minutest actions; recollecting that God did not redeem you 18
from the sinfulness and sensuality which disgraced the ages of old by any common or perishable ransom, but with the precious sacrifice of that pure 19
and spotless Lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ; an ex- 20
piation which the divine mercy and foresight had prepared for the salvation of mankind before[b] the foundations of the earth were laid, but which has remained unrevealed until these latter ages, when it 21
has pleased God to call you to rest your faith upon him who has raised your blessed Redeemer from the dead, and advanced him to eternal glory, as a pledge that your confidence and hope in his protection shall also find in due time their final compensation in the joys of heaven. As then being all of you 22
common sharers in these inestimable benefits, and, through the aid of the divine Spirit, all alike believers in this holy faith, let that community of hope display itself, during your earthly intercourse one with another, in the exercise of sincere brotherly love, proceeding from a pure and fervent

[a] How is this assertion of St. Peter reconcileable with the doctrine of irrespective election, and of God's arbitrary decrees?

[b] See Ephesians iii. 9.

23 heart; having your every feeling and inclination regenerated and springing up anew, not from the vitiated seed of your corrupt carnal nature, but from the divine seed of the word of the everliving
24 and eternal God. For our carnal nature has been well described by the inspired language of the prophet, when he assures us, (Isaiah xl. 6.) that "all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass: the grass withereth, and the flower
25 thereof falleth away; but," he also adds, "the word of the Lord endureth for ever." And that word, my brethren, is the word of the blessed Gospel which is preached to you.

2 Lay aside then, I entreat you, all malice, and deceit, and insincerity, and jealousies, and evil
2 speaking in your mutual dealings, and become as new-born infants, eager to imbibe the pure milk of heavenly wisdom, that by it you may grow up to
3 the full vigour of regenerated holiness. You have, I trust, already tasted enough of that precious milk
4 to know how gracious the Lord is: come then to Him as to a living corner stone of God's temple, although, as was foretold by the prophet David, it has been despised and rejected by the carnal build-
5 ers: and be yourselves also, as living stones, built into that sacred edifice: and present yourselves to him as a holy priesthood offering up to him the sacrifice of spiritual duty and service, rendered acceptable to him by the merits of Jesus Christ.

" Behold," says the prophet Isaiah, (Isaiah xxviii. 6
16.) " behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, a
tried stone, a sure foundation; and he that believeth
in him shall not be confounded." To you there- 7
fore, my brethren, who believe in him, he shall be,
according to the words of this prophecy, an honour
and a defence: but to the builders who rejected
him he shall be, not only, as was foretold of him,
the chief corner stone, but a stone also to make 8
them stumble, and a rock against which their feet
shall strike; for they stumble through their un-
belief against the holy word of God, as it was
declared of them that they would do. But you are 9
a chosen race, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation,
a purchased people, called to declare the praises of
Him who has summoned you from darkness into
the fulness of his marvellous light; being, as the 10
prophet of old declared of you, (Hosea iii. 22.)
" formerly not a people, but now the people of
God; formerly unvisited by the divine mercy, but
now having received mercy."

My beloved brethren, recollect then that you are 11
mere strangers and pilgrims upon the earth, and, as
such, abstain from all those earthly propensities and
appetites which would impede you in your spiritual
journey to your heavenly home. Let the unbeliev- 12
ing Gentiles have nothing to observe in all your
social dealings but what is good and praise-
worthy: that, having calumniated you as the ene-

nies of mankind, they may, by the contemplation of your good works when your conduct shall be rigorously enquired into by the temporal authorities, be obliged to confess that God's name is honoured by
13 the exemplary lives of his servants. Submit yourselves therefore to every established jurisdiction for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as the fountain
14 of authority, or to deputies as bearing his commission for the coercion of the ill-disposed, and the
15 encouragement of the good. For this is God's will, that by the purity of your lives and conversation you disarm the malice of those who would
16 misrepresent your actions; availing yourselves of that freedom from undue restraint which is the privilege of the Gospel, only that you may shew yourselves the more willing servants to your divine Master, and the more inoffensive members of
17 human society. Shew then due respect to all conditions of men whatever: love the brethren of the Christian community: fear God: honour the king.
18 Servants, be faithful and obedient to your masters, and not to the good and kind only, but also to
19 those who use you harshly; for it is an acceptable sacrifice to God when any person bears with human
20 injustice for conscience sake without repining. For

[c] "Christianos per flagitia invisos" is the term by which the historian Tacitus designates the early Christians, as he also stigmatizes our holy religion by the appellation of "exitiabilis superstitio."

where is the merit, if you bear patiently the punishment of your actual faults? but if, having done well, you suffer unjust punishment, and bear it without murmuring, such obedience is truly acceptable with God. For such is in fact the profession 21
of every Christian in this world, who must make his account to follow in the footsteps of his blessed Master, who submitted for our sake to the extremity of human persecution and injustice, making his exemplary patience a pattern for our imitation: who committed no sin, neither was any deceit found 22
in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled 23
not again; nor returned threats for ill usage; but submitted his cause to the one great, just, and righteous Judge: and who condescended to bear in 24
his own person our sins upon the cross, that we, dying as to our sinful nature, might live through him in regenerated holiness: "by whose stripes you are healed." (Isaiah liii. 5.) For you were, as 25
the prophet has described us all, "as sheep going astray," but are now turned back to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.

In like meekness of disposition with that already 3
recommended, be you, wives, obedient to your husbands, in the hope that, if any of them shall be disobedient to the law of Christ, they may be allured back to a better state of mind by the calm and persevering Christian demeanour of their wives, whilst 2
they have before their eyes the daily example of your pure and respectful submission. And let not 3

your ornaments be the external decoration of braided hair, or of golden trinkets, or expensive dresses,
4 but the internal attractions of the good feelings of the heart, those unfading charms of a mild and gentle disposition which are precious in the eyes of
5 God. Such were the ornaments of which the holy women in former ages availed themselves, who united a pious confidence in the Almighty with a meek submission to the authority of their husbands;
6 such, for instance, was Sarah, who is described as speaking of Abraham under the appellation of her "Lord:" whose daughters you are, so long as you live holily, without suffering the respect, which it becomes a wife to pay to her husband, to degenerate into the terror-stricken service of a slave.

7 Do you, husbands, in like manner, living with your wives as their affectionate advisers and protectors, shew them that attentive kindness which it becomes the stronger party to pay to the weaker; remembering that they have a joint interest with yourselves in the promised blessings of the Gospel covenant, and offering up your daily prayers conjointly with them.

8 Finally, be all of you, whatever may be your respective conditions, kind and sympathizing one with another, consorting together as affectionate
9 brethren, compassionate, obliging: not returning evil for evil, or bitterness for bitterness, but on the contrary repaying unkindness with blessings, knowing that such is every Christian's profession, and

that, in proportion as he forgives, he has reasonable grounds for hoping that he shall be forgiven. Re- 10
member accordingly the words of the inspired Psalmist, (Psalm xxxiv. 12.) "What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile; depart from evil, and do 11
good; seek peace, and pursue it. For the eyes 12
of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry; but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." Pretend not then to 13
urge against that universal meekness which I now recommend, that he who knows not how to resist oppression, is in fact inviting the oppressor to do him injury. To such objectors I answer in the first place by asking, "who will injure unnecessarily a person whose actions are uniformly harmless and benevolent?" and secondly, admitting that un- 14
deserved persecutions *do* befal you, I reply in the words of our blessed Saviour, "if you suffer persecution for righteousness sake, happy are you:" to which let me also subjoin the encouraging exhortation of the prophet, (Isaiah viii. 12.) "Fear not their fear, nor be afraid; but sanctify the Lord 15
of hosts, and let him be your fear." Be, at the same time, always ready to give an undismayed, but still a meek and unassuming, answer to your revilers in vindication of the sublime hopes of immortality with which you are sustained, never for a moment 16
compromising or giving the lie to the suggestions

of your consciences; in order that, whilst you are now calumniated by them as pernicious members of society, your very accusers may eventually be put to the blush by the irrefragable evidence of your
17 holy and Christian life. And surely it is far more desirable, if by God's will you must at all events suffer the persecutions of mankind, that it should be
18 for your good rather than for your evil deeds; for even so did Christ our common master suffer in his one great sacrifice for the sins of the world; the righteous for the wicked, in order that he might reconcile us to God; enduring death for us in his carnal nature, but being raised again by the energetic
19 operation of the Holy Spirit; by which Spirit we are assured he once preached to the antediluvian world, those rebellious people, (whose souls are now
20 reserved awaiting the final judgment,) who provoked by their obstinacy the patient forbearance of God in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing, in which a few, that is eight, souls were
21 saved by water. And so in like manner shall the water of baptism save us, (I mean not the mere external washing of our carnal bodies, but the internal baptism and purification of the heart and conscience in the sight of God,) through the resur-
22 rection of Jesus Christ, who is now ascended into heaven, and placed for ever upon God's right hand, far above all angels and the celestial hierarchy.
4 As then Christ in his carnal nature died for us, so in like manner do you, following his holy ex-

ample, and recollecting that he, whose body is 2
dead, is dead to sin, be careful to pass the remainder of your course upon earth as persons whose carnal desires are dead, and who live only to obey the holy will of God. For sufficient for all of us 3
have been the aberrations of our past life, when ignorant of the holy discipline of the Gospel, we lived according to the impure habits of the Gentiles, walking in lasciviousness, unbridled appetites, intemperance, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries, for your present abstinence from which 4
abominations you now incur the calumnies and malice of a sensual world. But be assured that 5
for all this God will bring them, both the dead and the living, to one common judgment. Meanwhile 6
be you, even in this life, dead: dead to the world, and to its corruptions, for to such are the promises of the Gospel announced; that, whilst the carnal minded shall reproach you for your deathlike indifference to the pleasures of this life, you may be in reality enjoying the fulness of spiritual life in your communings with God.

The consummation of all things is approaching: 7
be you therefore careful and vigilant in the daily exercise of prayer. But above all things maintain 8
mutual affection and charity amongst one another, for charity shall cover a multitude of sins. Be 9
hospitable to one another without grudging, each of 10
you, in proportion as he has received mercies from God, being ready to impart of his abundance to

others, as becomes a faithful steward in the management of the trust reposed in him by Providence.
11 If, for example, he has received the blessing of spiritual wisdom, let him instruct others, as one to whom God has communicated the knowledge of his mysteries: if he administers to the temporal necessities of the brethren, let him do it according to the extent of the means which have been bestowed upon him: that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.
12 My brethren, be not, I beseech you, dismayed at the fiery trial of persecution which God has permitted to befal you for the manifestation of your faith, as though it were something strange and un-
13 looked for: but rather exult that you are allowed to follow your Redeemer through the course of afflictions, as being a sure pledge that you will also be permitted to share in the glory of his second
14 coming. If you are reproached for the name of Christ, happy are you: for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you; a Spirit which is insulted by your persecutors, but which is glorified and hallowed by your patient endurance of affliction for
15 its sake. He only ought to look with terror to the inflictions of temporal authority who, like the murderer, the thief, the felon, and the mischief-maker,
16 has provoked them by his crimes: but let no man tremble or be ashamed on account of any sufferings which his profession of Christianity may draw down

upon him, but rather let him praise God that he has thought him worthy of so glorious a trial. For be assured that the day of God's visitation of 17
mankind is at hand: the first who shall undergo that searching examination shall be ourselves, the members of his own household; and if such is to be our trial for the manifestation of our faith, what are we to suppose will be that which, after ourselves, is to overtake the unbelievers, who have resisted and persecuted the Gospel? If such will be 18
the rigour of God's approaching vengeance, that scarcely the just man will be allowed to escape from it, what shall be the lot at that fearful time of the profane and the sinful? Wherefore let those 19
whom God may call to the endurance of afflictions be careful in the first place to secure a good conscience, and then let them confidently commit their souls to the keeping of their Creator, who they may be assured will not allow them eventually to perish.

And now let me admonish and exhort you the 5
several elders of your various communities, (for I am a brother elder with you, one who have been an eye-witness of our blessed Saviour's sufferings, and who look to be a partaker with you in the glory which shall be hereafter revealed,) let me 2
intreat you to feed as faithful pastors the flocks which have been respectively committed to your care, superintending their spiritual welfare, not as though it were an irksome task, but a pleasing

duty: not as a means of temporal profit, but as a
3 work of gratuitous kindness: not making a wanton
display of the authority with which you have been
entrusted for the edification of those over whom
you preside, but making your own lives a pattern
4 for the imitation of those whom you govern. And,
if such be your conduct, be assured that, when the
great Shepherd of us all shall appear in judgment,
you shall receive as your reward an imperishable
crown of glory.

5 And likewise you the common brethren of the
various Churches, be it your care to pay, not
merely the appointed reverence to your several
elders which God requires at your hands, but also
the mutual obligations of deference and regard one
for the other; wearing the Christian badge of hu-
mility; for God, we know, delights to debase the
proud, and to pour his blessings upon the humble-
6 minded. Humble yourselves then under the power-
ful hand of God, that in his good time he may raise
7 you up; reposing upon him the whole burden of
your cares and anxieties, for be assured that his
8 Providence will effectually provide for you. Be
sober, meanwhile, and vigilant; for your adversary
the devil, like a lion roaring after his prey, walks
9 about seeking whom he may devour: whom resist
to your utmost; reposing your trust in the pro-
tection of the Almighty; and recollecting that your
present trials are not peculiar to yourselves, but
are the common lot of the whole company of Chris-

tian believers throughout the world. And may the 10
God of all mercies, who has summoned us to his
eternal glory in Christ Jesus, when you shall have
undergone your share of allotted trial, make you
perfect, confirm, strengthen, and finally establish
you. To Him be glory and dominion for ever and 11
ever. Amen.

I have sent you these few lines by Silvanus, 12
whom I have every reason to confide in as a faithful
brother, for the purpose of encouraging you, and
bearing my testimony to the certain truth of that
merciful revelation on which you rest your hopes.
The Church of Babylon set apart, together with 13
yourselves, for the confession of the true faith,
salutes you: as also does my son Marcus. Salute 14
one another with the kiss of Christian affection.
Peace be with all of you who are in the faith of
Christ Jesus. Amen.

THERE is a remarkable coincidence between the arguments and sentiments contained in the preceding Epistle, and those expressed in various passages of the writings of St. Paul. That St. Peter had diligently studied the works of the former apostle is evident from his allusion to them by name in his second Epistle; and, that he did not in that passage intend to imply any disapprobation of the doctrines contained in them, is manifest from the similarity of thought which pervades the composition before

us, and which marks an exact conformity in feeling and opinions with the great teacher of the Gentiles on all the main points of the Christian revelation. This coincidence is worthy of observation, because we know from St. Paul's own statement, that considerable difference of sentiment had at one period existed between him and St. Peter on the subject of the observance of some of the cancelled rites of the Levitical law; and that he had on one occasion severely rebuked him for the inconsistency and unsteadiness of his conduct with reference to that question. That with predispositions originally dissimilar they should thus have eventually so perfectly united in adopting the same views of the scheme of our redemption, and inculcating precisely the same practical habits, can be attributed only to the irresistible force of truth, which will assuredly in due time assimilate every candid and well-principled mind to itself, be the primary bias what it may. Not the slightest Judaizing taint is to be traced in this beautiful Epistle; and yet we know its author to have been one who received the first revelation of the extension of God's mercies to the Gentiles, and of the final abolition of the Levitical scheme with astonishment, if not with distrust; and who, even after his better judgment was convinced, still instinctively lingered in the atmosphere of prejudices which he found it difficult not to cherish, whilst he knew them to be such. But the sincerity of character, which displays itself in almost every passage in the historical works of the New Testament, where any action of this favoured apostle of our Lord is related, was perfectly incompatible with any obstinate perseverance in acknowledged error; and accordingly the exposition of his opinions conveyed by this and the following Epistle, the date of which is supposed to have preceded his martyrdom by

that, in proportion as he forgives, he has reasonable grounds for hoping that he shall be forgiven. Re- 10
member accordingly the words of the inspired Psalmist, (Psalm xxxiv. 12.) "What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile; depart from evil, and do 11
good; seek peace, and pursue it. For the eyes 12
of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry; but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." Pretend not then to 13
urge against that universal meekness which I now recommend, that he who knows not how to resist oppression, is in fact inviting the oppressor to do him injury. To such objectors I answer in the first place by asking, "who will injure unnecessarily a person whose actions are uniformly harmless and benevolent?" and secondly, admitting that un- 14
deserved persecutions *do* befal you, I reply in the words of our blessed Saviour, "if you suffer persecution for righteousness sake, happy are you:" to which let me also subjoin the encouraging exhortation of the prophet, (Isaiah viii. 12.) "Fear not their fear, nor be afraid; but sanctify the Lord 15
of hosts, and let him be your fear." Be, at the same time, always ready to give an undismayed, but still a meek and unassuming, answer to your revilers in vindication of the sublime hopes of immortality with which you are sustained, never for a moment 16
compromising or giving the lie to the suggestions

of your consciences; in order that, whilst you are now calumniated by them as pernicious members of society, your very accusers may eventually be put to the blush by the irrefragable evidence of your
17 holy and Christian life. And surely it is far more desirable, if by God's will you must at all events suffer the persecutions of mankind, that it should be
18 for your good rather than for your evil deeds; for even so did Christ our common master suffer in his one great sacrifice for the sins of the world; the righteous for the wicked, in order that he might reconcile us to God; enduring death for us in his carnal nature, but being raised again by the energetic
19 operation of the Holy Spirit; by which Spirit we are assured he once preached to the antediluvian world, those rebellious people, (whose souls are now
20 reserved awaiting the final judgment,) who provoked by their obstinacy the patient forbearance of God in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing, in which a few, that is eight, souls were
21 saved by water. And so in like manner shall the water of baptism save us, (I mean not the mere external washing of our carnal bodies, but the internal baptism and purification of the heart and conscience in the sight of God,) through the resur-
22 rection of Jesus Christ, who is now ascended into heaven, and placed for ever upon God's right hand, far above all angels and the celestial hierarchy.
4 As then Christ in his carnal nature died for us, so in like manner do you, following his holy ex-



INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

1 SIMON PETER, the servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to all the brethren who are joint partakers with me in the precious faith in that covenant of righteousness which is from our God and from our 2 Saviour Jesus Christ—grace and peace be multiplied unto you, in the knowledge of God and of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The arguments in the following Epistle are chiefly directed against the gross immoralities of the Gnostics, of which the apostle speaks with becoming reprobation. For an account of the tenets of these heretics, see the note appended to Colossians ii. 18.

3 God having by his almighty power given to us all the necessary requisites for the attainment of immortality and holiness, in bringing us to the knowledge of Him who has called us to his covenant 4 of glory and righteousness, (by which the greatest and most precious hopes of future blessings have been set before us; namely, that having escaped from the pollutions of gross and carnal appetites, you should one day be assimilated to the purity of 5 his divine nature;)—such being the blessed means of salvation which he has placed in our hands, let it be our care to exercise all due industry in their proper application; and accordingly let us add to this his first great gift of faith proportionate zeal

that, in proportion as he forgives, he has reasonable grounds for hoping that he shall be forgiven. Re- 10
member accordingly the words of the inspired Psalmist, (Psalm xxxiv. 12.) "What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile; depart from evil, and do 11
good; seek peace, and pursue it. For the eyes 12
of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry; but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." Pretend not then to 13
urge against that universal meekness which I now recommend, that he who knows not how to resist oppression, is in fact inviting the oppressor to do him injury. To such objectors I answer in the first place by asking, "who will injure unnecessarily a person whose actions are uniformly harmless and benevolent?" and secondly, admitting that un- 14
deserved persecutions *do* befal you, I reply in the words of our blessed Saviour, "if you suffer persecution for righteousness sake, happy are you:" to which let me also subjoin the encouraging exhortation of the prophet, (Isaiah viii. 12.) "Fear not their fear, nor be afraid; but sanctify the Lord 15
of hosts, and let him be your fear." Be, at the same time, always ready to give an undismayed, but still a meek and unassuming, answer to your revilers in vindication of the sublime hopes of immortality with which you are sustained, never for a moment 16
compromising or giving the lie to the suggestions

of your consciences; in order that, whilst you are now calumniated by them as pernicious members of society, your very accusers may eventually be put to the blush by the irrefragable evidence of your
17 holy and Christian life. And surely it is far more desirable, if by God's will you must at all events suffer the persecutions of mankind, that it should be
18 for your good rather than for your evil deeds; for even so did Christ our common master suffer in his one great sacrifice for the sins of the world; the righteous for the wicked, in order that he might reconcile us to God; enduring death for us in his carnal nature, but being raised again by the energetic
19 operation of the Holy Spirit; by which Spirit we are assured he once preached to the antediluvian world, those rebellious people, (whose souls are now
20 reserved awaiting the final judgment,) who provoked by their obstinacy the patient forbearance of God in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing, in which a few, that is eight, souls were
21 saved by water. And so in like manner shall the water of baptism save us, (I mean not the mere external washing of our carnal bodies, but the internal baptism and [illegible]fication of the heart and conscience in the sig[illegible]od,) through the resur-
22 rection of Jesus Ch[illegible]is now ascended into heaven, and placed [illegible]on God's right hand, far above all angel[illegible] celestial hie[illegible].
4 As then Christ in [illegible]
so in like manner d[illegible]

that, in proportion as he forgives, he has reasonable grounds for hoping that he shall be forgiven. Re- 10
member accordingly the words of the inspired Psalmist, (Psalm xxxiv. 12.) "What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile; depart from evil, and do 11
good; seek peace, and pursue it. For the eyes 12
of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry; but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." Pretend not then to 13
urge against that universal meekness which I now recommend, that he who knows not how to resist oppression, is in fact inviting the oppressor to do him injury. To such objectors I answer in the first place by asking, "who will injure unnecessarily a person whose actions are uniformly harmless and benevolent?" and secondly, admitting that un- 14
deserved persecutions *do* befal you, I reply in the words of our blessed Saviour, "if you suffer persecution for righteousness sake, happy are you:" to which let me also subjoin the encouraging exhortation of the prophet, (Isaiah viii. 12.) "Fear not their fear, nor be afraid; but sanctify the Lord 15
of hosts, and let him be your fear." Be, at the same time, always ready to give an undismayed, but still a meek and unassuming, answer to your revilers in vindication of the sublime hopes of immortality with which you are sustained, never for a moment 16
compromising or giving the lie to the suggestions

of your consciences; in order that, whilst you are now calumniated by them as pernicious members of society, your very accusers may eventually be put to the blush by the irrefragable evidence of your
17 holy and Christian life. And surely it is far more desirable, if by God's will you must at all events suffer the persecutions of mankind, that it should be
18 for your good rather than for your evil deeds; for even so did Christ our common master suffer in his one great sacrifice for the sins of the world; the righteous for the wicked, in order that he might reconcile us to God; enduring death for us in his carnal nature, but being raised again by the energetic
19 operation of the Holy Spirit; by which Spirit we are assured he once preached to the antediluvian world, those rebellious people, (whose souls are now
20 reserved awaiting the final judgment,) who provoked by their obstinacy the patient forbearance of God in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing, in which a few, that is eight, souls were
21 saved by water. And so in like manner shall the water of baptism save us, (I mean not the mere external washing of our carnal bodies, but the internal baptism and purification of the heart and conscience in the sight of God,) through the resur-
22 rection of Jesus Christ, who is now ascended into heaven, and placed for ever upon God's right hand, far above all angels and the celestial hierarchy.
4 As then Christ in his carnal nature died for us, so in like manner do you, following his holy ex-

Remember, I am not now enforcing, nor have I 16
on any former occasion attempted to enforce, any
unauthorized or sophistical speculations of my own
as the religion of the blessed Jesus, but I have on
the contrary faithfully and accurately related to you
what I saw with my own eyes, and heard with
my own ears, when the doctrine which he taught, 17
and which we have derived from him, was con-
firmed by the solemn attestation of the Almighty
himself. For he received in my presence a positive 18
confirmation of his glorious office and revelation in
the awful voice from heaven which declared of him,
"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well
pleased," and that voice I, with my brother apo-
stles James and John, distinctly heard when we
were with him upon the holy mount. In addition 19
to which we have also to the same effect another
voice, namely, the strong confirmation of our
Saviour's mission afforded by the various prophe-
cies of the Old Testament; to which, as to a light
shining in a dark place, you will do well to turn
your attention for the removal of any lingering
doubts which may still perplex you in this your
earthly course, until the arrival of that day which
will clear up all which at this moment is obscure
and unexplained in God's mysterious arrangements.
For be assured that those prophetic writings are 20
not the mere guesses of private speculation, nor 21
were they delivered according to the caprice or

inclination of the persons uttering them, but they are the words of holy men beloved by God, and speaking as they were inspired by the communications of the Holy Spirit.

2 But as in the days of the true prophets there existed false prophets also, so among the teachers of the true Christian tenets there shall arise false teachers, who shall introduce destructive heresies, denying that Lord who redeemed them with his own blood, and bringing down destruction upon
2 their own heads: and many shall be seduced to follow their pernicious ways, so that even the true and orthodox belief shall be decried and evil spoken
3 of. In such hands the pure word of life shall become a mere merchandize for the glutting of their own avarice: but be assured that God's vengeance though it may be delayed is not asleep.
4 For if He spared not the very angels who sinned, but cast them into hell in chains of darkness to be
5 reserved for punishment;—if He spared not the antediluvian world, but destroyed for their sins the whole human race, with the exception of the
6 righteous Noah, and seven other persons;—if He overwhelmed in fire and ashes the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha, making them an awful example
7 of the punishment of licentiousness, but preserved the good man Lot who had been grieved by the profligate habits of his unprincipled fellow citizens,
8 and who from day to day had vexed his righteous soul by the contemplation of the deeds of abomina-

tion which he saw and heard[c];—if such are the 9
standing past records of God's discriminating justice, most assuredly will he continue in like manner to the end of time to deliver the sincere and obedient out of their various trials, but will reserve the ungodly for that tremendous day, when they shall appear before him in judgment. More particularly 10
will his vengeance then fall heavily upon those who shall be found to have run their mortal course in habits of profligate sensuality, having shaken off the yoke of wholesome discipline; men hardened in their own self-conceit, and shewing themselves petulant revilers of those established authorities appointed for the maintenance of good morals: authorities against whom the very angels of God, 11
high as their exalted nature is over that of every earthly jurisdiction, venture not to bring railing accusations before the Lord. Yet these persons 12
(senseless as those brute beasts which seem to exist only that they may be chased and destroyed) revile institutions which they have not the faculties to understand, and thus run headlong with reckless

[c] With regard to the many coincidences of thought and expression to be found in this Epistle with similar passages in that of St. Jude the reader is referred to the dissertation of Bishop Sherlock on that subject, subjoined to the Oxford edition of his Sermons. Vol. iv. p. 129. edition of 1812.

impetuosity into the destruction which awaits them.
13 And be assured that they will reap the due reward
of their misconduct. Their days are one continued
course of riot which they denominate pleasure.
They appear amongst your religious assemblies
like spots and deformities, converting a society of
14 Christians into a throng of licentious revellers, and
gazing around them with adulterous and sensual
eyes even in the very house of God; and thus it is
that weak minds are seduced by them to consider
our holy religion as sanctioning licentiousness, and
15 every worldly and selfish feeling. But the awful
curse which our Saviour will one day pronounce
against such abominations will assuredly come upon
them. Like Balaam the son of Bosor they have
left the right path, and have prostituted for gain
the blessed gifts of the Spirit to the cause of unrigh-
16 teousness; (and recollect that God allowed him,
though endowed with the gift of prophecy, to learn
a lesson of righteousness, and to receive a rebuke
for his avarice and impiety from the mouth of a
17 brute beast.) Like wells without water they entice
only to disappoint, holding out expectations which
they cannot realize; like passing clouds promising
the blessing of rain to a parched country, but
which shortly disperse themselves before the wind.
Of such men the end shall be the blackness of
18 eternal darkness. By plausible and specious so-
phistry attempting to disjoin what God has decreed
should be inseparably united, namely, an orthodox

belief and a holy and moral life, they seduce back again into the trammels of sin those who had already escaped from its snares; and making their boast 19
of their Christian liberty, by which term they mean licence, they debase themselves to the worst of slavery, the impure slavery of the passions which they want both force and inclination to resist. To 20
such men let me recal the awful words of our blessed Saviour, who assures us, that if, when we have made our hearts clean from the pollutions of impure appetite by the searching influence of the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, we again receive back into them the tempter whom we had succeeded in expelling, our case is from that moment far more hopeless than if we had never been converted, and that "our last state will be, under such circumstances, worse than the first." For 21
assuredly far better would it have been for us never to have known the path of righteousness, than, having known it, to have wilfully returned again into our sinful habits. But to the impure teachers 22
whom I am now describing we may justly apply the well-known proverb: "the dog is gone back to his own vomit; and the sow, which was washed, to her wallowing in the mire."

This is the second Epistle, my beloved brethren, 3
which I have written to you for the purpose of enforcing upon your minds the paramount importance of maintaining the holy doctrine of the Gospel pure 2
from the sophistry and corruptions of a wayward

world; and unadulterated as you first received it from the inspired predictions of the holy prophets, and from the mouths of us the commissioned apo-
3 stles of our blessed Lord and Saviour. For let me now forewarn you, that, as time passes on, and one age shall succeed to another without appearing to bring nearer the great consummation to which we finally look, not only corruptions of doctrine shall gradually arise, but men grown impatient at the
4 restraint imposed upon their passions, and at the procrastination of their hopes, shall begin to scoff at Christianity itself, as having excited expectations which it could not realize. "What has become," they will urge, "of the long-promised second advent of Christ? for the apostles of old who taught this doctrine have long passed away, and the operations of nature still continue in the same undeviating course [d] which they held from the beginning."

[d] This passage contains a wise and salutary caution, well adapted to meet the petulant impatience of mankind, which might otherwise be disposed to consider the protracted duration of the present world as an argument against the truth of the Christian revelation. Under the strong moral and intellectual excitement occasioned by the first promulgation of the Gospel covenant, an opinion is known to have prevailed extensively amongst the primitive converts, that the day of judgment was even then near at hand. St. Paul, as we have already seen, wrote his second Epistle to the Thessalonians chiefly for the purpose of dissipating this

Forgetting, or wishing to forget, that equally firm 5
and unchangeable appeared the state of the ante-
diluvian world, when, at the command of God, the
expanse of heaven beamed cheerfully over the earth,
and the dry land swelled prominent and smiling
above the surrounding waters: and yet notwith- 6
standing the day came when that same heaven
poured down its rain, and those same waters rose
from their ancient level to overwhelm mankind.
And in like manner no less certainly, tranquil as 7

unfounded apprehension. Since that period, however, nearly eighteen centuries have passed away, and yet, to use the expression in the Epistle before us, the operations of nature still continue in the same undeviating course. It is perhaps too early as yet in the history of mankind for infidelity to derive an argument against revelation from this circumstance; but we can readily imagine that, should the continuance of the present order of the universe be still eventually maintained through a vast succession of future ages, the time may probably arise when the misgiving here alluded to may begin seriously to shake the firmness of the conviction of the most sincere believers. Under such a supposition there appears to be much mercy in the arrangements of Providence, which have thus anticipated a formidable objection of infidelity, and suggested a satisfactory argument from which every humble Christian may, to the latest possible duration of time, derive increased faith and consolation under that procrastinated hope, which, as the wise man has observed, "makes the heart sick."

the present aspect of nature may be, that same heaven and this same earth are reserved for that period when God shall again utter his command, and they shall pass away in that universal conflagration which is in store for the day of final judgment, and for the destruction of ungodly men.
8 Remote as that awful moment may appear to us, short-lived and transitory beings as we are, let us remember that the intermediate interval is absolutely as nothing in the sight of God, with whom one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand
9 years as one day. If then the Lord appears at this moment slow to execute his judgments, it is not a slowness which proceeds from want of power, but from want of will; from his patient long-suffering; from his suspending again and again the day of his visitation in the still lingering hope that none should finally perish, but that all may come to
10 repentance. But as the thief comes upon men unawares in their midnight slumbers, so shall that awful moment arrive when the world shall least expect it; when the heavens shall pass away with a roar, and the natural elements shall dissolve in fire, and this globe and all the mighty works of
11 man upon it shall be burnt up. But if thus transitory is the tenure of our mortal possessions, what then are the habits of life and conversation which best become creatures thus circumstanced?—holi-
12 ness, assuredly, and godliness of heart:—such holiness and such godliness as may not only patiently

wait, but eagerly and cheerfully look, for that great day of our God's coming, when the material heavens shall pass away in flames, and the elements of nature shall melt in one common conflagration. God also, we know, has promised, and we dwell with 13
unshaken confidence upon the fulfilment of that promise, that a new heaven and a new earth, in which righteousness shall be established for ever, shall succeed to that perishable creation which we now inhabit. Wherefore, my beloved friends, en- 14
tertaining this glorious expectation, be it your care to be found by our great Master at his second coming without spot and blameless, in peace with God and man. Meanwhile, be assured that the 15
long-suffering of our Lord is not forgetfulness of his purpose, but a delay suggested by the immensity of his mercy, that men may perchance even yet awake from their sins and be saved; as our brother Paul has expressly asserted to you in those divinely inspired writings which he has addressed to you; as also in his other Epistles to the several Churches, 16
in which he discusses these mysterious topics, from which some ignorant and unstable teachers would derive (as they would also from other portions of the sacred writings) conclusions of the most dangerous and pernicious tendency.

And now, my beloved, being thus forewarned, 17
make it your earnest endeavour that you be not misled by the erroneous doctrine of these false teachers, and that you fall not away from the pre-

18 sent stedfastness of your faith; but grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

To Him be glory both now and to all eternity. Amen.

It is lamentable to observe, how, in despite of the lessons of experience and of the express declarations of Scripture, human nature, when placed under similar circumstances, continues in all ages to retrace the same endless circle of vice and folly which brought down the severe reprobation of the apostles upon the heretics of the primitive Church. We learn from the preceding Epistle at how early a period the emancipation of the Christian world from the vexatious slavery of the ritual law began to produce a violent reaction in the moral and religious feelings of mankind, similar to that which the sudden abolition of a temporal tyranny has often been known to work in their political and civil habits. The relaxation of a system of extreme restraint was followed by its too natural consequence, a system of extreme licence. The first apostles had preached to mankind the blessed doctrine of a free pardon of sin through faith in the expiatory redemption wrought by the death of Christ; but they had at the same time carefully inculcated the obvious and necessary consequence of that doctrine; that the great and pure Being, who had in this signal manner marked his strong abhorrence of sin, must inevitably continue to disapprove of it under all possible circumstances; and accordingly, that a

good life, though not the operating cause of man's salvation, was still an inseparable accompaniment of a sincere and effective faith. But the selfishness of human passions, fostered by the mistaken theories of the Gnostics, was then, as it has frequently shewn itself since on similar occasions, much more disposed to grasp at the proffered mercy as a gratuitous benefit, than to bear its own share in the fulfilment of the conditions. Because the redemption proposed for man's acceptance was declared to be a voluntary concession of the divine benevolence, it was presumptuously and impiously urged, that a Being thus infinitely gracious could not be disposed to examine the infirmities of our nature with a very scrutinizing eye; and that as the expiatory merits of our Saviour were infinite, they were of course sufficient to cover, when appealed to through the medium of faith, all sins of deliberate and wilful commission no less completely than those resulting from the insuperable infirmities of human nature. The main proposition therefore which stood foremost in the writings of St. Paul, respecting the necessity of faith in Christ's atonement as the sole operating cause of our salvation, was eagerly caught at, whilst the inference so certainly deducible from it of the importance of good works, which had been uniformly maintained by that great apostle, was overlooked as a thing of no moment. To this growing heresy accordingly we find occasional allusions in the later Epistles of that inspired writer. Still however it is probable, that the abuse in question was more prevalent among the Jewish converts, who fell under the spiritual superintendence of Peter, and our Saviour's immediate disciples, than among the Gentiles, who had derived their instruction from the preaching of Paul. The natural effect of a pure and spiritual doctrine when addressed to the profligate heathens might be presumed to be the adoption of

a more correct, if not austere, morality; but the removal of the Levitical restraints from the Jews was an apparent relaxation of discipline, against the abuse, consequent upon the misapprehension of which, it required no small degree of strong sense and good feeling to be sufficiently vigilant. That St. Peter therefore should have found it necessary to caution his readers in the Epistle before us against the possible misconception of the momentous truths inculcated by his brother apostle, can excite in us no surprise. But we should recollect, that the heresy here combated is not one of those which, deriving their first origin from accidental circumstances, disappear when the contingencies which gave rise to them are withdrawn. On the contrary, the seeds of it lie deeply imbedded among the first principles of our moral constitution; and we may therefore presume, that so long as the present world shall continue, the apostolical admonitions conveyed in this inspired composition will retain their original importance.

We all know how speedy was the fearful moral reaction produced in Germany and elsewhere by the first excitement of the Protestant Reformation, and with what deep abomination, similar to that expressed by the primitive apostles, the pious Luther was known before the close of his life to lament the gross immoralities of the fanatics of his time. Those monstrous and blasphemous perversions of the scheme of the blessed Christian dispensation may, it is probable, be never again repeated in all their original deformity; but the extremity to which that delusion was carried by the Gnostics of ancient, and the Antinomians of recent, times, and the wide circle over which we know it to have spread, are awful proofs of its close connexion with a natural human infirmity; and may serve to forewarn us, how surely it will manifest a tendency to reappear wherever

the strong stimulant of religious fervour is excited without a concurrent attention to the doctrines of practical holiness, and a solemn impression of the unsullied and ineffable purity of the divine attributes.

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN.

THE reference to the impending destruction of Jerusalem contained in the following Epistle, together with other internal marks, would seem to place the date of its composition at a much earlier period than that usually assigned to the Gospel written by the same apostle. The coincidence of thought and feeling in both those inspired works strongly mark the identity of their author. The principle so urgently enforced by the writer, that love to God and man is the only sound basis of religion, and the only effectual motive to holiness and perfect obedience of heart, is precisely that which might be expected to proceed from the disciple whose gentleness and affectionate warmth of character conciliated to him in so remarkable a degree the attachment of his divine Master.

1 THAT manifestation of the incarnate Word of life
which we have personally witnessed from its very
beginning; which we have seen with our own eyes,
and have been permitted to look upon; and which
2 our own hands have felt and handled, (for the great
Source of life was made visible to human eye-sight,
and we ourselves saw it, and accordingly bear our
witness to the certainty of its appearance, announcing to you the revelation of that eternal self-existent
Being who was resident with the Father, but who
condescended to appear in a human shape upon the
3 earth,) that wonderful revelation, I repeat, which
we ourselves have been allowed to see and to hear[a],

[a] St. John thus earnestly insists upon the fact of the visible and substantial personality of our blessed Saviour

do we now announce unto you; that the same blessed community of intercourse which has been vouchsafed to ourselves from the eternal Father and from his Son Jesus Christ, may through us be extended to you also. And accordingly these things 4
we now write unto you, that your joy in Him may be complete.

This then is the divine message which we have 5
received from his mouth, and which we now, as his ministers, declare unto you; namely, "that God is the great Fountain of light[h] and purity, unsullied by any shadow of darkness or pollution whatever." If then we profess to have any community or parti- 6
cipation with his all-perfect nature, yet at the same time indulge in works of darkness or impurity, such professions, be assured, are a manifest contradic-

whilst upon earth, of which his own familiar intercourse with him had rendered him an incontrovertible witness, for the purpose of repelling the absurd theory of the Gnostics already alluded to; namely, that the supposed incarnate and crucified Redeemer was nothing more than an incorporeal phantom invested with the external appearance and circumstances of human nature.

[h] The greater part of this Epistle appears to be little more than a practical comment upon the valedictory exhortations of our Lord, addressed to his disciples on the eve of his crucifixion, as related by St. John in chapters xiii. xiv. xv. xvi. and xvii. of his Gospel. The passage before us in the text appears to be an allusion to the sentiments contained in verse 46 of the twelfth chapter.

7 tion, and inconsistent with the truth. But if, on
the other hand, we walk in that light and holiness
in which he himself makes his dwelling, we then
have fellowship with him and with one another, and
the blood of his Son Jesus Christ cleanses us from
8 all our sins. If indeed we say that we have no sin,
we deceive ourselves, and are ignorant of the real
9 debased condition of our fallen nature: but if, in-
stead of denying our sins, we humbly confess them,
He is faithful to his promises, and just in his dis-
pensations, to forgive us those sins, and to cleanse
10 us from all our unrighteousness. If, I say again,
we assert that we have not sinned, we are giving
the lie to his positive declarations, and are betray-
ing our ignorance of the great purpose of the Gospel
covenant.

2 My dear children, my object in writing to you
therefore is, to exhort you, in the first place, to
abstain from all manner of sin whatever; and,
secondly, if through the infirmity of human nature
you fall into sin, then to recollect that we have
an Advocate with the Father, the righteous Jesus
2 Christ, and he is the propitiation for our sins; and
not for ours only, but also for those of the whole
3 world. And accordingly, by this sure criterion we
may know whether we apprehend him and his holy
covenant aright; namely, "if we keep his com-
4 mandments." He who asserts of himself that he
knows Christ, and yet wilfully violates his com-
mandments, is a liar, far removed from the know-

ledge of his truth. But he, on the contrary, who 5
carefully observes and performs the injunctions of
his divine Master, is giving the most perfect and
satisfactory proof of the real fervour of his love.
By this rule then can we assuredly know whether
we are really and truly his disciples; since, if we 6
are indeed sincere in our profession of attachment
to his service, we are by a natural consequence
bound to follow that example of perfect obedience
which he himself afforded during his continuance
upon earth. My brethren, this is no new command- 7
ment which I now give, but old as the very first
establishment of religion. To this original duty of 8
love to God, however, I have now to add also that
second and new commandment which constituted
one of the last injunctions delivered by our blessed
Redeemer whilst upon the earth, and which was so
beautifully exemplified in his conduct, as it should
be in yours; for from henceforth the darkness of
imperfect revelation is passed away, and the true
light of holiness remains, in which it is our duty to
walk. "A new commandment," said he, "I give
to you; that ye love *one another;* as I have loved
you, that ye also love one another." (John xiii. 24.)
He then who flatters himself that he is in the light 9
of the Gospel dispensation, and yet hates his bro-
ther, may be assured that he is still in his original
darkness. He who loves his brother walks in the 10
light, and, as being in the light, shall find no occa-
sion of stumbling; but he who hates his brother 11

is, I repeat, in darkness, walking about in the midst of it unsteadily and uncertainly, because his intellectual eyes are blinded.

12 My children, I write then now to you, to remind you that your sins are forgiven you through faith in the name and merits of Jesus Christ.

13 Fathers, I write to you to recal to your recollection what yourselves have seen and heard of our blessed Saviour during his residence on earth, and that you conform your lives accordingly to that glorious and perfect pattern.

Young men, I write to you, to encourage you with the recollection that you have struggled with, and conquered, the evil powers of this world.

To you, children, I have addressed myself, because you have been brought to the knowledge of our Almighty Father.

14 To you, fathers, I have addressed myself, because, having had an example of true perfection before your eyes, you cannot but know how to adapt yourselves to it.

To you, young men, I have addressed myself, because you have yet the entire possession of your faculties, and have already fought the good fight against the powers of evil, as champions in the holy cause of God.

15 Love not, I beseech you, the world, nor the things of the world. He who fixes his affections upon the world will never fix them, as he ought to
16 do, upon his heavenly Father also. For all the

things of this world, the carnal appetites, the display of magnificence, the insolence of wealth, are of earth, and not of heaven, and the earth, as we 17
know, shall pass away, and all its attractions with it. But he, whose study is to do the will of God, is imperishable as that solid foundation on which he builds his hopes.

My beloved children, the time of the final de- 18
struction of the Jewish nation, as foretold by our Saviour, is drawing nigh. You remember the signs by which he declared that you should be able to know when that day was approaching. "Many," said he, "shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many." (Matthew xxiv. 5.) And accordingly many false Christs have appeared, from which circumstance we may certainly conclude that the time of which he prophesied is at hand. Commencing with us as teachers of the true faith, 19
these men were never sincere members of our community. Had they been real partakers with us from the first of the knowledge of the pure doctrine, they would have finally continued with us in the profession of it: but their apostacy has brought to light the original unsoundness of their pretensions. You however have received enough of the assisting 20
communications of the Holy Spirit to be in no danger of being misled by their deceitful doctrines: I write not therefore to you at present for the pur- 21
pose of instructing you as to what the true faith is, but because I feel assured of the accuracy of your

knowledge, and that you will immediately perceive the falsehood of what these men would teach as
22 the word of revelation. Who then are these false teachers against whom our blessed Saviour has forewarned you? Who but they who deny that Jesus is the promised Messiah? Who is the antichrist of whom he prophesied, but he who denies both the
23 Father and the Son? for in denying the Son he denies also the Father who bore witness of him.
24 Be careful then to remain stedfast in the profession of that doctrine which you have received from the first; for in abiding firmly by what you then received as the word of truth, you are abiding in the blessings of that covenant made with you by
25 the Son and the Father conjointly: and this is the glorious promise which shall be inherited by those who shall thus manifest their obedience, namely, "everlasting life."
26 Thus much I have thought it expedient to write to you on the subject of the deceitful teachers who
27 are abroad; but, as I have already observed, your minds have been sufficiently illuminated by the Holy Spirit to supersede the necessity of any instruction which it is in my power to bestow; all that I will say therefore is, that, as by that divine guidance you have been enabled to embrace the true doctrine of the Christian dispensation, so, I trust, you will be enabled to remain unshaken to
28 the last in the sincere profession of it. Continue then, my children, to acknowledge him as hereto-

fore, for your Redeemer and Saviour, so that when he shall return to judge the world we may stand before him with confidence, as having nothing of which our consciences shall be able to accuse us. And remember, that, as we are assured that he is 29
holy in all his ways, so those are especially his sons, and are born of him, who are careful to perform the works of holiness.

Observe also what must be the extent of the love 3
of our Almighty Father for us, in that he deigns to be called by that endearing appellation, and to consider us as his children. If then the world rejects and hates us, the reason is manifest, for it also rejected and hated him. Even in that respect 2
therefore, as suffering persecution from those who persecuted him, we feel another proof that we are at this moment his children. What indeed we shall one day be, has not yet been revealed to mortal flesh and blood. But we know at all events that when he shall reappear in glory, we shall also be glorified with him, and shall be admitted to look upon his glory face to face. Recollect, however, 3
that no one can reasonably cherish this sublime hope, but he who earnestly strives to render himself worthy of being received into the divine presence, by rendering himself pure even as God is pure. He who falls into wilful sin, falls also 4
at the same time into wilful rebellion, for sin is the breach of God's laws, and as such is rebellion against him. And we know that the very 5

end and object of Christ's mission to mankind was to abolish sin, as we know also that his own nature
6 is perfectly sinless. He then who is truly his shuns, and abstains from, sin; whilst the deliberate sinner, however he may deceive himself by false hopes, has no real knowledge of, nor communication with, him.
7 Be not deceived then, my dear children, by the dangerous delusion that you may hold by your Christian faith whilst leading an immoral life; but be assured, that he only can be said to resemble his divine Master in holiness, and to be himself holy, who is such in the practical excellence of his
8 works. That man who continues in sin is the son, not of Christ, but of the devil; for the devil was a sinner from the beginning. And remember that it was to break down the power of the devil that
9 Christ was made manifest in the flesh. He who is really born of God abstains from sin, because he partakes of the pure nature of his divine Father; his former evil appetites cannot continue in his new
10 and regenerated character. You can then be at no loss to discriminate between the sons of God and the sons of the devil. That man cannot be the son of God who leads an immoral life; nor again can he who does not sincerely and from his heart love
11 his brother; for such was the positive command conveyed by our blessed Master in his parting
12 valediction, "that we love one another." By the hatred which induced Cain to murder his brother, that person shewed himself to be the true child of

the devil. And why did he murder him? For a reason which none but the devil could have suggested: because his own works were evil, and those of his brother were righteous. Wonder not then, 13
my brethren, if in like manner an evil world hate and persecute you. We, on the other hand, have 14
within our own breasts a sure and infallible test that we are the children of God, and have passed from death to life, in that we love our brethren. He therefore who feels that he wants this true mark of a Christian disposition, may be assured that he still remains in the death of unrighteousness. The 15
man who hates his brother is in disposition, if not in act, a murderer: and you know that no murderer has the promise of eternal life. The great proof 16
which our gracious Redeemer gave us of the immensity of his love was in that he laid down his life for us[c]; and we his disciples ought in like manner to be prepared to follow his example, and to do the same for our brethren. When therefore one 17
calling himself a disciple of Christ possesses this world's goods, and yet can look upon the necessities of his brother without a disposition to administer to his relief, can we say of that man, that he is an imitator of that glorious pattern of disinterested love displayed in the conduct of his divine Master?

Let then our love, my beloved children, be not 18
the mere external profession of kindness, but the

[c] See St. John's Gospel xv. 13.

sincere love of the heart displaying itself in works
19 of mercy and good will; and so shall we feel
assured of the soundness of our religious disposi-
tion, and shall look up to Him with confidence.
20 For if our hearts and consciences condemn us as
deficient in this foremost Christian excellence, we
may be assured that he who made our hearts, and
who dictates to our consciences, will not acquit
21 us. But if our consciences acquit us, we may
assert with confidence that God will not condemn
us.

22 Remember also that our only sure and reasonable
ground for hoping that he will grant any petitions
which we may make to Him upon our own account,
is when we are earnestly disposed to obey his will,
and to do such things as may be pleasing to him:
23 but we know that his special commandment has
been that we should repose our whole trust in
the name of his Son our Saviour Jesus Christ,
and also that we should love one another; ac-
cording to that same Saviour's positive injunction.
24 He then who keeps these commandments dwells
in God and God in him; and this is the proof
that God really dwells in us; namely, *the holi-
ness of the disposition which his blessed Spirit excites
within us.*

4 By this infallible rule then, my beloved, judge of
the real character of those various impulses which
profess to be the dictation of God's Holy Spirit. It
is not every one who imagines that he acts by im-

mediate inspiration, who in reality does so. On the contrary, many false pretenders and false prophets have gone forth into the world. Let this then 2
be the criterion by which to guide your judgment. "Every one who teaches *that the Son of God was made very and actual man for our redemption*, speaks according to the infallible suggestions of the holy Spirit of truth." On the contrary, he who would 3
set up a philosophy of human invention in opposition to this doctrine, and would teach you, as many heretics have lately done, that Christ did not actually exist in the flesh, speaks not by the dictation of the Spirit of God, but by that of Antichrist, of whose coming you have been forewarned, and who is already commencing his career of deceit. You, 4
my dear children, are of God, and have therefore been able to withstand the plausible arguments of these deceitful teachers; for the divine Spirit which instructs you is more powerful than the spirit of this world from which they derive their false opinions. They are men of this world, and conse- 5
quently prefer their own carnal speculations and human wisdom to the spiritual knowledge which is from heaven; and accordingly the sons of this world lend a willing ear to them. We, on the con- 6
trary, are of God, and he therefore who understands what God's will really is, hearkens to us; whilst those who are ignorant of that will turn away from us. Would you then be able to distinguish the dictates of the Spirit of truth from those of the

spirit of error?—ask yourselves on which side those who best apprehend the will of God arrange themselves; and let that rule guide your judgment.

7 Above all things then, my brethren, let us love one another, recollecting that love proceeds from God; and that it is by the fervency and purity of the love displayed by each individual that we feel assured that he is of God, and duly apprehends the
8 will of God. Be assured, that he who is incapable of the kindly affections, is no less incapable of duly
9 apprehending God, for "God is love." And to such an extent has our heavenly Father manifested the immensity of his love for us his children, that he sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we
10 might obtain immortality through him; and yet the more astonishing was this signal display of the divine benevolence, in that it was not in return for any previous love of ours towards himself, but was a free communication of gratuitous love on his part, in giving his Son as an expiation for our sins, at a time when his anger might have been justly
11 provoked against us. If then, my beloved friends, such was God's love towards us his then rebellious children, much more ought we to love one
12 another. No man has even been admitted to see God, that he should love him with that warm intimacy of feeling [d] which is due to our natural con-

[d] The indulgent allowance which is uniformly displayed throughout the inspired writings for the inevitable infirm-

nexions on earth: but we are assured that, if we love one another with a Christian benevolence, the Spirit of God abides in us, and that the fervency of such affection will be accepted by him from us, as

ities of our nature affords a striking trait of the divine benevolence by which they are dictated. Nothing can be more certain, whether we appeal to the light of human reason, or to the revealed word of Scripture, than that God is, in his perfect and unsullied nature, an object infinitely more worthy of the most ardent love than any created being can possibly be supposed to be. Still, however, our limited feelings and faculties are not in this life adapted for the full reception of these abstract impressions. Love, such as we must feel it so long as we continue to be mere human creatures, must ever be too much the result of unreserved familiarity, and the interchange of mutual good offices, to be strictly applicable to our relation with regard to our Creator. The kindliness of our affections, however, in the intercourse of society, and in the exercise of our domestic duties, is, as the apostle observes, at all events, a sure criterion of an original predisposition to that more perfect love of God, which a more adequate apprehension of his adorable and attractive attributes may in a purer state of being be expected to produce. The sentiment therefore here expressed is in exact accordance with the assertion of our Saviour with reference to works of charity, which, though not the actual fulfilment of the first and great commandment, will nevertheless, he assures us, be accepted by him as such. "Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Matthew xxv. 40.

though it had been directly addressed towards himself.

13 In proportion then as we feel that we possess the illumination of his Holy Spirit in the perception of truth, and are actuated by those kindly affections which we know to be essential to his nature, we may confidently assert that we are one with him,
14 and he with us. I who now address you, have been permitted personally to witness, and to bear my testimony to, the astonishing fact of the actual
15 incarnation of our blessed Redeemer; he then who abides by this the true faith, and acknowledges Jesus to be the Son of God, may be assured that
16 God dwells in him, and he in God. I have also myself personally witnessed the immensity of the loving-kindness of that gracious Being; and I can therefore bear my testimony that God's very essence is love, and that every individual who is actuated by a similar spirit of love to him, and of mercy and kindness to mankind, in like manner dwells in God, and God in him.

17 The glorious result of this blessed disposition of love towards God and man is that we are enabled to look forward with hope and confidence to the tremendous day of judgment, in the conviction that we have followed his divine example, and pursued our way through this world treading faith-
18 fully in his footsteps; for, where such feelings of affection exist, apprehension is out of the question, since it is impossible that we should perfectly

love[e] a Being whom we dread; the sentiment of fear being an anticipation of punishment, not of mercy, and consequently being incompatible with that fervent love which delights to dwell upon the more gracious attributes of the object of its worship. Our love for God is a natural conse- 19
quence on our part of our consciousness of the immensity of the blessings which we have previously received from Him, differing in intensity, but not in nature, from that with which we repay all acts of kindness which we may have experienced from our fellow creatures. He then who asserts 20

[e] It cannot be doubted that much serious injury in after life has been occasioned to the religious feelings of many truly well-disposed persons, by the indiscreet mode of conveying spiritual instruction adopted by their early teachers. To instil the unmixed terrors of religion, and to dwell exclusively upon the formidable attributes of the Almighty, is perhaps the most immediately operative appeal which we can make to the minds of young persons, but, like other powerful stimulants, it is not always, if ever, the best. In a breast which has thus been taught from early infancy to shrink with apprehension from the contemplation of the supreme Being, that affection of the heart which is the only legitimate source of true piety and good morals, is necessarily a plant of slow and unwilling growth. The first appeal uniformly made to our feelings throughout the sacred writings is that of conciliation and kindness; the last, and by far the least frequent in its occurrence, the threat of punishment.

that he loves God, yet at the same time feels no kindly affection towards his own brother, is a liar; for it is impossible that he should feel any real attachment to his Creator whom he has not seen, if his heart warm with no sentiments of attach-
21 ment to his brother whom he has seen. And this accordingly is our blessed Redeemer's express injunction, "that he who loves God, love his brother also."
5 If then we believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and if we love God with all that fervour which his mercies are entitled to claim at our hands, it follows as a necessary consequence that we love the Son with the same affection which we cherish for the Father: and as the love which we bear to the Father extends also to his eternal and divine Son, so ought it also to descend to his mortal children,
2 his servants upon the earth. But the best proof which we can afford both to ourselves and others that we do cherish these feelings of universal love for God's creatures is, that we love God himself, and feel earnestly disposed to obey his command-
3 ments. This obedience is the natural and necessary consequence of our love, provided that love be sincere. Nor is the obligation to a holy life which such love imposes upon us a painful or irksome
4 duty. Every one who is really regenerate and born of God is detached from the false pleasures of this world, and able to triumph over their temptations: and the strength which he possesses for the achievement of this victory is the consequence of his

love[e] a Being whom we ho then is he 5
of fear being an anticip owers of this
of mercy, and consc at Jesus is the
with that fervent love ankind. This is 6
the more gracious : ot by the purify-
worship. Our lov also by the expia-
quence on our ou and God's holy
immensity of t ath, bore witness to
viously receiv our belief in him 8
but not in
all acts of
from our

ace to omit the well-known
ng the testimony of the three
e idea that, whatever may
state of that controversy,
[e] It the clause in question has
life b matical to disqualify it
trul authority in support of
con whilst such superfluity
to mental tenet of our faith is to
to portion of the New Testa-
vious admission, much of what
ume would be contradictory
to me that by pertinaciously
disputed text, we run the
cause which we are anxious
laborate investigation of this
which has been almost unre-
date of Porson's celebrated
s scarcely to be hoped that
thrown upon the subject;
ed, that the *preponderance*
ntexity of the clause in ques-

then we have this threefold and concurrent testimony; namely, that of the Holy Spirit, by whom we are illuminated and sanctified; our baptism, by which we are regenerated and made partakers of his covenant; and his sacrifice upon the cross, to which we and all mankind look for justification and the
9 remission of our sins[5]. We have not only therefore the testimony of his mortal followers to the reality of his person and divine mission, but that far more cogent also of the Almighty Being himself:

tion. This admission, however, can subtract little or nothing from the weight of testimony supplied by the whole context of Scripture in support of the Trinitarian tenets. That such was the faith of the primitive Church cannot be seriously doubted by persons at all conversant with the history of that period. Whence then were those opinions derived? Undoubtedly from the obvious tenor and context of the apostolical writings, and from the oral communications of their inspired authors. The passage in question is supposed to have been originally a marginal comment, which was subsequently by mistake admitted into the text: but that very supposition necessarily implies, that the doctrine alluded to had been previously assented to as an acknowledged scriptural truth on other, and entirely independent, grounds.

[5] I am far from satisfied that I have given the right interpretation of this difficult passage, but I am not aware of any other mode of rendering it more consistent with the original expressions, and the general tenor of the argument.

for such testimony did he bear when he pronounced of him the words, "this is my beloved Son." He 10
then who believes in the Son of God, has the witness of that Spirit which illuminates his understanding, and suggests to him all good desires as the seal and guarantee of his belief; whilst he who believes not, makes that blessed Spirit a liar, in denying that solemn testimony to be true which God himself gave to the reality of his Son's person and mission. By that infallible testimony we are as- 11
sured that God has given to us eternal life, and that the gift of eternal life is communicated to us through the merits and redemption of his Son. He 12
then, who is one with him in the blessed communion of the Son, has life, and he who shares not in that blessed participation has not life.

These things I have written to you, that you 13
might all of you feel confident that you have the infallible promise of eternal life, through faith in the name of the Son of God.

We are moreover unhesitatingly convinced, that, 14
if we ask any thing of him according to his will as communicated to us by his blessed Son, he will favourably hear us: and if he favourably hear us, 15
we are no less confident that we shall receive at his hands the object of our petitions. If then any man 16
see his brother falling into sin, such sin I mean as the infirmity of a heart not entirely hardened to the feelings of Christian piety may be supposed capable of falling into, let him pray God for him, and be

assured that to such a person so prayed for God will be prevailed upon to restore the assisting grace of his holy Spirit. There is indeed a deadliness of sin so fearful, that we can have nothing to do with it but to leave it to God's own mysterious judgment, and where any prayers[h] of ours would come
17 amiss. But there are gradations in sin; under every shape and degree indeed it is offensive to God, but still there are inferior stages of wickedness for which, as the consequence of human weakness, he may without impropriety be entreated by us, and which he will not consider incompatible
18 with the display of his mercy. Still recollect, however, at the same time that the truly regenerated Christian has all his original sinful propensities quenched in the purifying influence of a Christian disposition, and *commits no deliberate and wilful sin whatever*, but keeps watch over his own conduct, and repels by constant vigilance the assaults of the
19 tempter. And such we are assured that we are, called to the regeneration of the Gospel covenant through faith in Christ, whilst as yet the great bulk of mankind lie still immersed in the deadliness of
20 their own sins. Meanwhile we look forward with hope to our Redeemer's second coming, who has in his mercy given us a right apprehension of his

[h] The apostle appears in this passage to have had in his mind the words of our Saviour as recorded in chap. xvii. ver. 9. of St. John's Gospel.

truth; that truth to which we have all pledged our obedience; namely, the truth which is in his Son Jesus Christ.

This is the doctrine of the true God, and of eternal life. My dear children, abstain from all 21
community with idols.

It is remarkable that no allusion is made in the preceding Epistle to the name of its writer, but its identity in style and sentiment with many parts of the Gospel of St. John affords irrefragable testimony that both works are the production of the same author.

THE
SECOND EPISTLE
OF
JOHN.

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

1 THE Elder to the Lady, the chosen servant of God, and to her children whom I love in the truth of Christian sincerity, (and not I only, but all 2 others also of the community of believers, being joint partakers in the covenant of the divine truth in this world, as we trust that we shall also be 3 through all eternity,) grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in love and in truth.

In this short Epistle St. John warns some lady of eminence, one of his own converts, against the seductions of the Gnostic heretics who had begun to prevail extensively in the Christian Church. The sentiments and arguments are nearly the same with those which are more copiously developed in the preceding Epistle.

4 It was with extreme pleasure that I perceived lately in the conduct of some of your children with whom I have had communication that you and they continue to walk perseveringly in the practice of that true and holy doctrine which has been revealed 5 to us from above. And now, Lady, I repeat to you, not a new and fresh commandment, but one which is the very foundation of every Christian's belief; namely, the great rule of our blessed Master, 6 that you "love one another;" remembering at the

same time that such sincerity of love as I now recommend is best shewn by our living in all respects in obedience to the divine will, and as faithful servants of Christ. Now the divine will is that you preserve inviolate the pure doctrine of revelation in all points, precisely as you first received it from the fountain head, namely, from us the immediate followers and apostles of Christ. For many deceivers and false teachers have lately 7
gone forth into the world, who have ingrafted their own false and ungrounded speculations upon the true Gospel, denying that our blessed Saviour did ever really appear in actual flesh and blood, and in all the actual circumstances of the human nature. Beware, I beseech you, of every such 8
teacher, as being a deceiver and antichrist; and look carefully to the soundness of your own faith, that my laborious instruction in times past may not be lost upon you, but that I may have the gratification of seeing it produce in you the fruit of a sound and orthodox belief. Be assured that 9
every one who innovates upon that peculiar doctrine, for the truth of which we have our Saviour's own positive declaration, is in hostility with God; whilst he, who carefully abides by the truth as we first received it from our gracious Master, has the blessing of both the Father and the Son abiding upon him. Should then such a false teacher as 10
I have now described come to you, and attempt to inculcate his heretical opinions, receive not that

person into your house, nor salute him as a friend
11 or a brother; as by so doing you would be, at least indirectly, giving your sanction to his mischievous and false opinions.

12 I have many other instructions to give you, but shall not convey them in writing, as I hope to be enabled to visit you personally, and to have the gratification of a free and unchecked conversation
13 with you upon those points. The children of your excellent sister salute you.

THE

THIRD EPISTLE

OF

JOHN.

1 THE aged apostle to the beloved Caius, whom I
love in the fellowship of the covenant of truth,
greeting.
2 My beloved brother, I earnestly pray to God that
you may enjoy all temporal health and prosperity
in the same proportion in which you possess the
3 gifts of spiritual holiness: for it was with no small
pleasure that I recently heard from some of our
brethren of your exemplary perseverance in the
4 profession of the Gospel truth. Believe me, the
highest gratification which this life can afford me is
to hear that my scholars, whom I have sedulously
instructed in the doctrines of the Christian revela-
tion, continue stedfastly to adhere to their confes-
sion of that holy dispensation.
5 The many acts of kindness, my dear friend,
which you have performed, both towards our Chris-
tian brethren, and to others, are such as are in
perfect accordance with the benevolent character of
6 our religion, and as such have been honourably and
gratefully reported to the various members of our
Church. You will do well in persevering to display
the same beneficent disposition whenever an oppor-
tunity shall be afforded you, by your hospitable
attentions to such of our members as accident may
7 throw in your way: for recollect that their wander-
ings are for the service of Christ, and that conse-

quently they can have neither claim nor expectation from those of a different persuasion from ourselves. Of course therefore the duty is the more incumbent 8 upon us to shew them every possible kindness, and in so doing to contribute to the more easy propagation of the doctrines of the Gospel which they are commissioned to preach.

I have written to the assembly of the Church 9 respecting my own intentions; but Diotrephes, whose ambitious spirit is unwilling to give place to one who would come with authority superior to his own, is endeavouring to render my design abortive, and to prevent my being received by them. Where- 10 fore, when I arrive, I shall take proper notice of his conduct, and of his calumnious language against me; especially as I hear, that, not contented with his hostility to my own person, he has set his face against receiving the other brethren, and has even gone so far as to expel from the Church such persons as in contradiction to his injunctions have treated them with kindness.

Let not your own conduct, my friend, be in- 11 fluenced by so pernicious an example, but persevere in doing as you have already done: being assured that a benevolent disposition is of God, and that a harsh and inhospitable character is in direct hostility with him.

Of Demetrius I hear from all quarters a favour- 12 able report, not only respecting the kindness of his disposition, but also as regards the stability of his

religious belief; and I myself, who as you know have had many opportunities of forming a correct judgment of him, can vouch for the justice of such reports.

13 I have much to communicate, but shall abstain from doing so in writing: I hope however shortly to see you, and to communicate with you personally.

14 Peace be with you. Your friends in this place salute you: salute my friends in your neighbourhood severally by name from myself.

THE

GENERAL EPISTLE

OF

JUDE.



INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

1 JUDE, the servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James, to the brethren sanctified by God the Father, and set apart as chosen followers of Jesus
2 Christ,—mercy, and peace, and love be multiplied to you.

The Epistle of St. Jude, like the second of St. Peter, to which it bears a remarkable resemblance, and the first and second of St. John, is directed chiefly against the then prevalent heresy of the Gnostics, and more especially against that branch of them which inclined to the impious doctrines of Antinomianism. The express reference in verse 18, to the passage 2 Peter iii. 3. and the identity of the allusions contained in both Epistles to writings then extant, but which have been subsequently lost, clearly mark the similarity of purpose in the writers of both compositions, and the strong anxiety with which each of them respectively contemplated the first commencing symptoms of corruption in the pure doctrines of Christianity.

3 Being extremely anxious, my beloved friends, to write to you on the subject of our common hopes of salvation, I felt the necessity still more urgent, when, from the circumstances of the times, I perceived myself called upon to exhort you more particularly to avoid the dangerous and seductive heresies which are now abroad, and to cling to that pure form of doctrine which was delivered by our gracious Redeemer to his apostles, and by
4 them communicated to mankind. For certain false

teachers have lately crept into the Church, against the abomination of whose principles you have long been prophetically forewarned, who have had the daring impiety to represent the holy covenant of mercy as sanctioning the grossest licentiousness, and to deny our only Lord and Master Jesus Christ. Accordingly I have been induced to interpose this 5
solemn warning, and to remind you of the well-known judgments which befel our apostate forefathers, who, after having been miraculously rescued by the intervening arm of the Almighty from Egyptian bondage, finally perished in the wilderness through their unbelief. In like manner we 6
know, that even the [a] angelic beings, who acted unworthily of their high condition, and contumaciously abandoned the stations to which they were appointed, are at this moment reserved in everlasting chains and darkness for the final judgment of the great day. Thus also [b] Sodom and Go- 7
morrha, with the other cities in their neighbourhood, whose abominable licentiousness called down upon them the infliction of divine vengeance, are even now in their present smoking desolation a standing example of the severity of God's judgments upon sin. Yet with these awful proofs before 8
them of his irreconcileable abhorrence of all impurity, these profligate teachers, bewildered in their own dreams and misconceptions, give their sanction

[a] See 2 Peter ii. 4. [b] 2 Peter ii. 6.

to the indulgence of every impure appetite; despise the restraint of wholesome authority, and calumniate the rulers[c] whom God has set over them.
9 (Yet it is related of Michael the archangel, when he contended with the devil about the body of Moses, that even he dared not to bring against him a railing [d]accusation, but left him to God's judgment,
10 saying only, "The Lord rebuke thee.") But these men speak contemptuously of institutions of which they have not the understanding to perceive the excellence, and following, like the [e]beasts of the field, every impulse of reckless appetite, run blindly
11 along in the road of perdition. Woe unto them! for they have walked in the paths of Cain; they have forsaken their duty for a bribe like the seducer Balaam, and fallen into the destruction which befel
12 the self-willed and rebellious Corah. These are they who turn your feasts[f] of Christian love into a profane and intemperate revel; men, who, like clouds without rain, seduce you with vain expectations never to be realized; like trees whose fruit withers before it is ripe, and which are rooted up and
13 thrown away as incurably barren: like raging waves of the sea, tossed about by their own malignant and disgraceful passions, and like the meteors of the night, blazing for a moment, only to be extinguished
14 in perpetual darkness. It is related of Enoch, the

[c] 2 Peter ii. 10. [d] 2 Peter ii. 11.
[e] 2 Peter ii. 12. [f] 2 Peter ii. 13.

seventh in descent from Adam, that he prophesied of the coming of these traducers of good morals, and of the infliction of God's vengeance upon them. "[g] Behold," said he, "the Lord cometh with his innumerable army of saints, to execute judgment 15
upon them, to convict them of their impiety, and of all their deeds of abominable wickedness which they have committed, and of all the licentious sophistry with which they have advocated the cause of sin, and the violation of his commandments." These are fretful and impatient complainers, slaves 16
to their own selfish lusts, and contumacious in their intercourse with their superiors; yet cringing adulators of those from whom they hope to derive profit. But, my beloved friends, recollect the early 17
warnings which you received from the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ against the seductions of these men: particularly the description given of them by Peter in his Epistle, where he declares that "there 18
shall arise in the latter ages a scoffing and licentious race, who should walk in the unrestrained indulgence of their own ungodly lusts." These are they who 19
are now striving to raise a schism in the Church; slaves to every animal appetite, and entirely void of spiritual righteousness.

[g] This passage is supposed to be an extract from the apocryphal book of Enoch, to which reference is occasionally made by the early Christian Fathers, but which is no longer extant.

20 Be it yours, my beloved, on the contrary, to
build up with care the solid fabric of your faith, to
pray for the illumination and aid of God's Holy
Spirit, to cherish the sentiment of fervent love and
21 gratitude to your Almighty Father, and to look
forward with humble confidence to that mercy of
our Lord Jesus Christ, through which we hope to
22 arrive at everlasting life. As to the seducers against
whom I have placed you upon your guard, let your
conduct towards them be regulated by the various
degrees of their guilt: the less culpable admonish
23 with compassion for their weakness, the more hard-
ened censure with detestation of their deeper guilt,
snatching them at all hazards, if it be possible, from
the fire of God's wrath, and detesting the very con-
tact of the garments which have been infected by
the deadly pollutions of the flesh.

24 Now to Him who is able to preserve your feet
from stumbling, and to place you before his glorious
tribunal in joyful confidence, and without blemish,
25 to the one God our Saviour, be ascribed glory, and
majesty, and power, and dominion, through our
Lord Jesus Christ, for ever and ever. Amen.



CONCLUSION.

HAVING now brought to a conclusion this exposition of the Apostolical Epistles, I am desirous, before I finally take leave of the subject, to venture a few brief remarks upon the peculiar character of the doctrines which they contain, and upon the nature of the evidence which they afford for the confirmation of our faith. The first impression which their perusal must, I think, force upon the mind of every impartial person is, the perfect sincerity and earnestness of their several writers:—the second is, the actual identity of the doctrines, both theoretical and practical, which, under a somewhat dissimilar exterior, they will upon a very slight examination be found respectively to inculcate. We have in these interesting compositions, it should be observed, the recorded sentiments of five distinct persons, all of them liable, like ourselves, to be impressed with those various peculiarities of feeling and of early association, which, on all important topics, and more especially on the paramount question of religion, have a tendency to separate one man from another by encouraging the indulgence of favourite theories, and exclusive habits of thought. Yet such notwithstanding is the harmony of idea which pervades these writings, that it would, I conceive, be impossible to produce from them one single line or sentiment which might not with perfect consistency

be transferred from the page of its actual author to that of any one of the four others where the same subject shall have been discussed. A characteristic difference of manner and a predisposition in each of them to dwell with a certain degree of preference upon this or that particular branch of Christian morals is indeed perceptible throughout; but this is a diversity as desirable in itself as, from the nature of the human mind, it is inevitable. That five different persons, each of them severally occupied in pourtraying the mysterious Christian scheme, should have varied somewhat from one another in the lights and shades, the tone and colouring of their works, was of course to be expected; whilst their perfect concurrence in the delineation of the main features affords the strongest proof of the real accuracy of the drawing. Accordingly it is this very "discordia concors," this combination of diversity of character with real unity of purpose, which renders the important portion of the sacred writings now under discussion at once so irrefragable an evidence of the truth of revelation, and so highly and so practically useful as a rule of Christian holiness. Had it pleased the wisdom of Providence to have restricted the communication of his will conveyed in the volume of the New Testament to the four books of the Gospel and that of the Acts of the Apostles only, it would perhaps be difficult to shew that, in point of abstract knowledge of the great principles of our faith, we should have laboured under any actual deficiency, which the additional possession of the Apostolical Epistles has removed. Yet, even if disposed to make this concession in its fullest extent, every Christian who is really anxious for his soul's improvement will feel truly grateful to that merciful Being, who has afforded to him so vast a store of spiritual wisdom as that which is contained in these latter writings. Had they never ex-

isted, or never come down to us, we should still indeed have possessed the knowledge of the fundamental conditions and of the main principles of the Christian revelation: we should even then have been taught how perfectly valueless in the sight of God are the most meritorious human actions as a means of salvation; how indispensably requisite is the strengthening aid of the Divine grace for our fallen nature, how unattainable man's final justification by any agency short of the infinite merits and expiation of Christ. But such is the waywardness of our moral and intellectual constitution, that general positions and abstract truths have little effect upon our practical habits. Passion and prejudice can incapacitate us as effectually for the proper application of a rule, as for its original discovery. It was therefore a wise and benevolent arrangement of Providence, which ordained that our religious instruction should be transmitted to us, not so much in the form of a technical system of philosophy, as in that of successive comments upon the several portions of the Christian scheme, according as the collisions of opinion under the operation of external circumstances rendered them necessary. It was by such means only that theology could be brought down from heaven to earth, and be made to adapt itself effectually to the realities of life. A tendency to recur to supposed first principles, though at the expence of overlooking or explaining away some of the most positive declarations of Scripture, is even now, after all the precautionary measures by which its meaning has been fixed and defined, the besetting sin of a vast portion of the Christian community. What then would have been the case had the Apostolical Epistles never been composed, and human caprice accordingly been left free to choose its own construction of those primary truths, the practical

bearings of which are now authoritatively determined by a positive rule from which there is no appeal? Moral injunctions however cautiously worded, but which had never been made to bear upon the real detail of life, would have afforded but a feeble barrier against the ingenious sophistry of passion; and transcendental doctrines, which had never been specially applied as an infallible standard by which to mark out the nice boundaries which separate truth from falsehood, would have been confidently appealed to in support possibly of those very heresies which they now serve to refute.

Not only however was such a supplementary comment upon the Christian revelation as, by God's mercy, has been afforded to us in the epistolary writings, absolutely necessary for our complete apprehension of it in all its bearings, but we may add also that it was desirable, if not indispensably requisite, that it should contemplate that awful subject from different points of view, and under the influence of different intellectual associations.

Had, for instance, the Epistles of one only of our Lord's disciples descended to us, vast as would have been the value which would have attached to them, still they could not have completely effected that purpose which has been so fully accomplished by the diversified compositions which we actually possess. Every individual brings with him to the profound discussions of theology, if not the reality, at least the suspicion, of a bias. And even if we consider such a suspicion in the case of an inspired teacher to be out of the question, still we must at all events admit that the peculiar circumstances under which he may have been placed with respect to his own immediate converts may occasionally have made it imperative upon him *from prin-*

ciple to dwell more particularly upon some single and partial view of the theory of revelation, to the comparative neglect, if not to the actual exclusion, of others not less intrinsically important. In addition therefore to the most unblemished integrity in the writer, it requires the collision, not merely of various individual feelings and predispositions, but that also of contingent external events, operating severally upon several parties, to call forth the complete discussion in all its parts of so intricate and extensive a system of belief as that of the Christian revelation, and to secure the adequate transmission of a scheme thus minute and comprehensive for the edification of aftertimes. And such is precisely the advantage which has accrued to religion both in speculation and practice, from that dissimilar mode of discussing the same really identical and harmonious doctrine which characterizes the Apostolical Epistles. The very different position of Paul with respect to his own peculiar converts, from that occupied by James, Peter, John, and Jude, with reference to theirs, made it to a certain degree incumbent upon him to consider the Christian dispensation from a position directly opposite to that from which they were disposed to regard it. Having been commissioned to undertake the conversion of the *Gentile* world, he must necessarily have laid it down as the foremost duty of his office to establish, in the first place, solidly and substantially the foundation of *faith* in the Jehovah of the old, and in the crucified Saviour of the new, covenant; and, having secured that great elementary principle, then, as an obvious consequence, to erect upon it the superstructure of Christian holiness and of a good life. And according to this consistent view of the subject, we find him uniformly looking forward prospectively through the whole system, from its first commencing germ

to its final and complete developement. The four last-mentioned apostles, on the contrary, having to deal almost exclusively with Jews, found many of the primary dogmas of the religion which they had to inculcate already in great measure assented to as articles of faith. To them therefore the task of elementary initiation was comparatively easy. It was not the doctrine of *a* Messiah which they had to originate, but that the crucified Son of Mary was *the* Messiah, whose advent had been impatiently expected: and in announcing the covenant of divine mercy as proffered to all mankind they were only enlarging the operation, and refining the principle, of that covenant already acknowledged to subsist between the Almighty and the Jewish nation. The errors therefore which *they* had to combat, and to guard against, were of an entirely different character from those which called forth the occasional objurgations of St. Paul. The besetting sin of the converted Gentiles was a tendency to mistake the real conditions of justification in the sight of God; and from a natural abhorrence of their former grossness and immorality whilst immersed in the darkness of paganism, to deviate into the contrary extreme of a superstitious adoption of the ritual expiations of the Levitical law, in addition to the faith and obedience required of them as believers in Christ. The mistake of the Jewish converts was, on the other hand, that which most easily suggests itself to persons recently emancipated from a system of servile and vexatious discipline; namely, the abuse of their newly acquired liberty; and we find accordingly that the object of the admonitions of *their* instructors consists almost entirely in the inculcation of moral restraint, and the duty of practical holiness; whilst the no less important requisite of faith, if not actually taken for granted as a thing of

course, is at all events less earnestly and obtrusively dwelt upon.

All this is exactly what might have been expected under these very different circumstances; and we may add also, that it is that very arrangement which is best calculated for the complete inculcation of the truth in all points, and under every aspect. Like two rival but enlightened advocates, each several writer has thus used the whole energy of his mind in the improvement of his own peculiar department; whilst the common principles on which they are all agreed derive additional confirmation from the conviction which we feel that such harmony of sentiment is the result, not of any calculated confederacy, but of an honest and impartial conviction of the truth of the doctrines inculcated. Nor has the effort which they have respectively made to guard against the growth of peculiar systems of error been greater, as subsequent experience has shewn, than the circumstances imperatively required. The heresies denounced in their several writings, though opposite in their character, were all of them such as, being founded in human nature, are ever likely to reappear under some form or other; and which therefore each required their own appropriate and separate refutation. Those arguments of St. Paul which were originally urged against the superstition and legal righteousness of the Galatian converts are no less applicable at this moment, when directed against the fantastic ritual of the Church of Rome, than they were in their primary reference to the doctrines of those Judaizing Christians of the primitive ages: whilst the indignant abhorrence expressed in the writings of the other apostles with regard to the blasphemous impieties of the Antinomian Gnostics are no less admirably calculated to repress at any subsequent period the presumption of fanaticism, which, as we are painfully

reminded by almost every page of history, is ever on the alert to advance the plea of a peculiar possession of God's favour, as a claim to emancipation from the most sacred duties of practical morality.

The uniform tone of reverential awe in which the person of our blessed Redeemer is alluded to throughout the Apostolical Epistles, is another circumstance which those persons who are disposed to object to the doctrine of his divine nature would do well seriously to consider. That St. Paul, who had known him only through the medium of the most stupendous preternatural events, should ever be found to speak of that tremendous Being with the deepest solemnity might naturally be expected. But with regard to the other apostles this consequence seems somewhat less obvious. We all know the equalizing tendency of familiarity in domestic intercourse between persons of the most dissimilar rank and condition of life. But the intimacy of friendship to which the disciples of our Lord were admitted for so long a period, appears not for a moment to have trenched upon their reverential adoration of him as an immediate emanation of the eternal Godhead. Above all, we find that sentiment most strongly marked, where perhaps we should least be prepared to look for it, in the writings of the beloved disciple St. John. The unequivocal assertions of our blessed Saviour's divinity contained in his Epistles and in his Gospel are justly considered as affording some of the strongest scriptural proofs of that important doctrine. But that such an impression should have taken complete hold of a mind which had been permitted to trace the object of its reverence through the humble incidents and detail of private life, can be accounted for only upon the supposition that the evidence confirmatory of that impression was of too decided a character to be shaken by even that most critical and perilous test. Certain it is that no misgivings

or interventions of doubt upon this subject ever seem for one instant to suggest themselves to that apostle's mind. It has accordingly been well remarked, in reply to those impugners of our Redeemer's divinity, who assert that this doctrine is of comparatively recent origin, and was unknown to the primitive Church, that, on the contrary, the heresy which stood most conspicuous in the age of the apostles was that which denied, not his *divine*, but his *human*, nature; and that, so far from being called upon to prove him to be very *God*, (a point universally acknowledged,) the great difficulty seems to have been to persuade the first polluters of the Christian faith, that he was also, really and actually, very *Man*. It was not, until the lapse of time had subdued by distance the astounding effect produced by his miraculous career upon earth, that human audacity dared to attempt to lower him to the scale of a merely mortal teacher, or even to that of the foremost and most glorious of God's created beings.

One other observation, and that of a truly awful and melancholy character, but which is well calculated to afford a salutary warning to ourselves that we presume not upon our present spiritual advantages, will naturally suggest itself during our perusal of this interesting portion of the sacred writings. The pervading characteristic of these beautiful, eloquent, and profound compositions is the deep and earnest anxiety manifested by their respective authors for the spiritual welfare of the Churches committed to their care, and the complete self-devotion with which they surrendered every faculty, every interest, both of soul and body, for the accomplishment of that important object.—Yet where now are the Christian Churches of Jerusalem, of Ephesus, of Colosse, of Galatia, of Salonica, of Philippi, of Crete, of Corinth?—where, we may even ask, that of Rome itself? The answer is a short and painful one. The

tares, the thorns and briars of this world, were too powerful and rank for the growth of the good seed, and choked it. In vain did their respective inspired teachers lift up their voice against each commencing corruption as it arose; against the superstitions which had already begun to encumber, and the human theories which were even then adulterating, the simplicity of divine truth. The evil principle was too strong to be thus checked. Error succeeded to error, and abuse to abuse; and the result has been, that Mahomedan imposture is now spreading its baleful influence over the greater part of those regions which our Lord's own apostles once fostered with parental solicitude, and from whence Christianity derived its first growth and nurture; and even in that quarter where the faith of Christ is still professed, the name of our religion indeed remains, but its form, its beauty, its simplicity are gone. Superstitions far more portentous than those denounced by St. Paul have superseded the spiritual holiness of the Gospel; and the very Scriptures themselves, which could alone effectually define the evil and point out the remedy, are become a sealed book, inexorably closed to the many wanderers who might otherwise under its guidance retrace their steps to that primitive doctrine from which they have so widely deviated.

Here then let me conclude this imperfect survey of the Apostolical Epistles, of which I can truly declare, that the more close examination of them into which I have necessarily been led in the course of my present undertaking, has served only to confirm and heighten that previously strong impression of their paramount value, as aids both to faith and practice, which was my motive for the commencement of this work. Should I eventually have reason to believe that the result of my attempt has been to recommend them more completely to others, of whatever con-

dition in life, by rendering them in any degree more accessible, or more easy of apprehension, I shall derive a reward from my labour far surpassing in my own estimation any which the highest attainments in general knowledge or the most elegant acquirements in literature can impart to their possessor.

THE END.

BAXTER, PRINTER, OXFORD.

Lately published by the same Author, price 12*s.*

SERMONS ON SOME OF THE LEADING PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIANITY.





